the weekly
Standard

FEBRUARY 7, 2000 $3.95

BILL CLINTON'S LAST GASP
ANDREW FERGUSON

Our Bodies, Our Surgeons

Feminism in the Age of Body Worship

BY DAVID BROOKS

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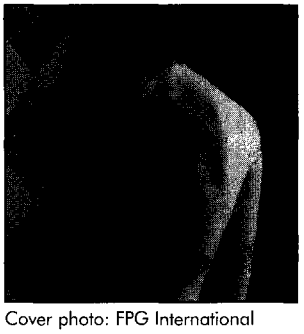

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One Step Forward, Five Steps Back

Yongyi Song, the Dickinson College librarian whose plight was recounted on this page last week, was released by Beijing on Friday. Song had been imprisoned since a trumped-up arrest last August for "smuggling" research material on the Cultural Revolution. Does this mean there's a thaw in Beijing? Hardly. Consider the rest of what was a typically busy week at the office for Communist despots in China—and for their cringing supplicants in the Clinton administration.

On Sunday, Jan. 23, came word that authorities in Hebei province had arrested, on charges of subversive religious practice, five members of China's underground Roman Catholic church. Among the detained were Han Dingxiang, bishop of Yongnian, who has already spent a total of 20 years in jail, and lay leader Wang Chengqun, who is partially paralyzed as a result of his last incarceration in a labor camp.

On Monday, Jan. 24, news reached the West that an "Intermediate People's Court" in Eastern Turkestan had imposed death sentences on five members of the persecuted Uighur Muslim ethnic minority. According to the state-controlled *Xinjiang Daily*, all five were guilty of engaging in "separatist activities through illegal religious propaganda."

On Tuesday, Jan. 25, staff writers at the *Nanfang Zhoumou* newspaper in Guangdong province reported that their editor, Jiang Yiping, had been sacked by local Communist party officials—for "political errors" that included publication of a feature story on the "decadent" Hong Kong action movie star Jackie Chan.

On Wednesday, Jan. 26, the Beijing *People's Daily* published new rules promulgated by China's State Press and Publication Administration granting the Communist party monitoring and censorship authority over all Internet websites in the country—and banning the employment of journalists by those sites.

Also on Wednesday, the Hong Kong-based Information Centre of Human Rights and Democratic Movement in China released details of two Chinese Falun Gong adherents' murders by police. Gao Xianmin was arrested on Dec. 31 for participating in an illegal picnic lunch. He was forced to drink salt water and severely beaten. He died of heart failure. On Jan. 10, coal miner Liu Zhilan attempted to submit a petition to Beijing authorities protesting such abuses. She was forced to clean the offices of the Zhoukoudian police substation—and died from breathing poison gas "while resting in the station's furnace room."

As the week drew to a close, new U.S. ambassador Joseph Prueher told reporters in Beijing that he had had "very good" and "very dense" meetings with China's president, Jiang Zemin, and premier, Zhu Rongji. Human rights came up in both meetings, Prueher said. "I've committed to our hosts not to lecture on this subject." ♦

Al Gore Whopper Watch

It's not fair that Bill Bradley should have to single-handedly keep Al Gore honest. That's too much work for any man alone. Two Gore whoppers in particular struck THE SCRAPBOOK this week.

The most egregious was Gore's preposterous claim that "the Clinton-Gore administration has ended the deepest recession since the 1930s." This is fiction through and through. As Lawrence Lindsey pointed out in an op-ed for the *Wall Street Journal* last week, the infamous recession of 1990-91 in fact lasted only two successive quarters, "the shortest period that meets the definition of *recession*." And that short recession was not nearly so severe as those of say, 1974 and 1982, which Al Gore presumably should remember.

Gore also danced around his record on abortion with the artful formulation, "I have always supported a woman's right to choose."

Not so fast. As Matthew Rees detailed in a WEEKLY STANDARD article last October, during Gore's eight years in the House, he had an 84 percent pro-life voting record, as tabulated at the time by the National Right to Life Committee. He made statements like, "I have consistently opposed federal funding of abortions" and even went further, saying "innocent human life must be protected, and I am committed to furthering this goal." Indeed, in 1979 he even voted against a Henry Waxman amendment authorizing federal funding for abortions in cases of rape and incest.

Bradley knows this record well, and so he challenged Gore's evasion. Gore acknowledged that "early in my career I wrestled with the question" of federal funding. But then he returned to his script, saying "I have always supported a woman's right to choose." ♦

Elián, American

Elián González's meeting last week in Miami Beach with his visiting Cuban grandmothers produced a surprise defection: Sister Jeanne O'Laughlin, a Miami eminence in her own right besides being a pal of attorney general Janet Reno, decided after hosting the meeting at her home that

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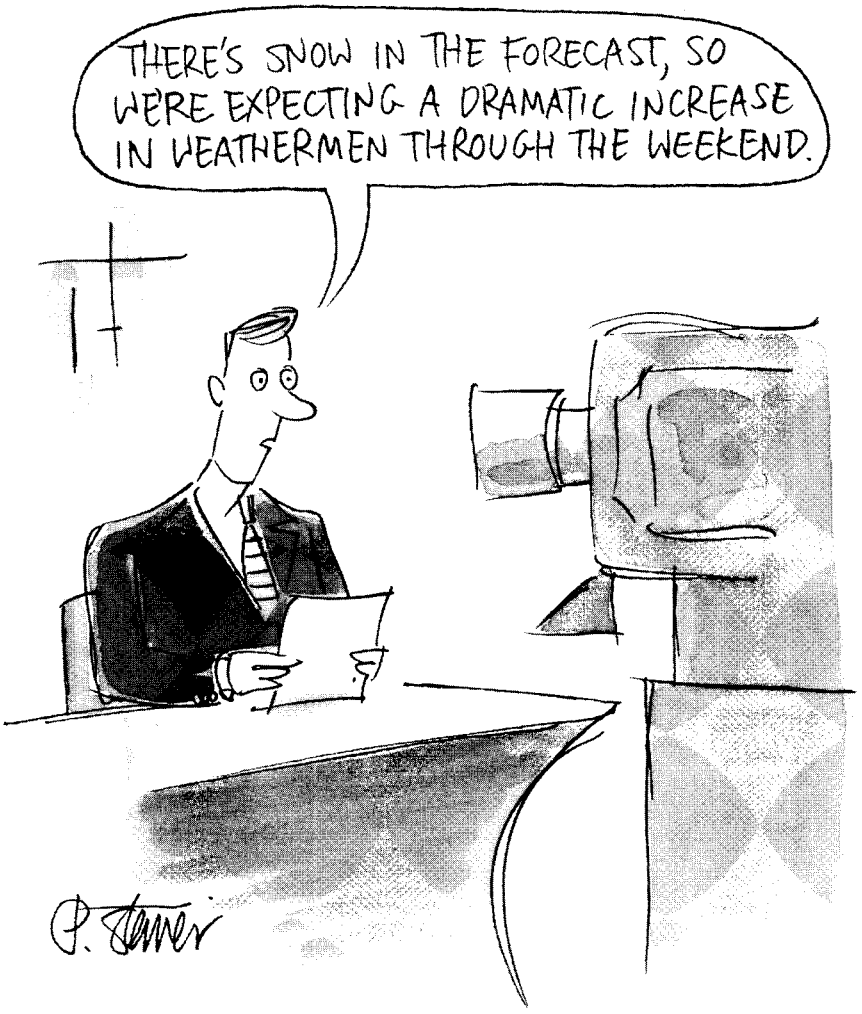

Elián should stay in America, and not be sent back to his father in Cuba, as Reno and the Clinton Justice Department insist.

"It became clear to me the grandmothers were not free to be grandmothers. They were under duress," O'Laughlin told reporters. "After serious prayer and reflection, I feel that to send the child back to a land steeped in fear would not let him grow to be the man he could be if he grew to manhood in freedom." As if to confirm the soundness of O'Laughlin's judgment, Fidel Castro's minions immediately launched a propaganda assault against her, saying that Elián's "loving and heroic" grannies had been the victim of "lies, tricks, betrayals, humiliations, and an unhuman and despotic treatment" at the hands of the Dominican nun.

Reno was unswayed by O'Laughlin's change of heart. And appallingly, the once-solid Republican congressional support for Elián's right to stay in the United States has begun to erode. GOP members seem to have been more affected by credulous press fawning over the grandmothers' Castro-scripted U.S. visit than by O'Laughlin's courageous witness.

But the most disgraceful performance came from Democratic congresswoman Maxine Waters of California, who denounced O'Laughlin: "I am bewildered," Waters said. "Never in my wildest imagination would I think that a nun who was supposed to be a neutral party would undermine that neutrality." Yes, conscience must be a bewildering thing to the likes of Waters. ♦

Dept. of Murkiness

The late American journalist Claire Sterling won international fame with her 1981 book *The Terror Network*, in which she demonstrated that many of the world's spontaneous-looking local terrorist outfits actually took their marching orders and got their ammo and training from the Kremlin.

That fame has apparently not yet reached *New Yorker* foreign correspondent Mary Anne Weaver, nor the people who transcribe interview tapes for the magazine, nor the *New Yorker*'s "vaunted" fact-checking department.

In the course of an article on Osama bin Laden, Weaver interviews a former State Department official named David Long. "Is Osama bin Laden the exclusive font of terrorist evil?" Weaver quotes Long as asking. "No. This is an informal brotherhood we are seeing now, whose members can draw on each other; it's not a *clear, sterling network*."

The *New Yorker*'s comprehension turns out to have been no more clear than its knowledge of terrorism was sterling. ♦

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Casual

Deciding to Home School

When our daughter Faith was born, my wife Lorena and I lived in New York, in a two-bedroom apartment on the lower East Side. In fact, it was much more New Yorky than that. What we actually had was a pair of one-bedroom apartments, side by side. To throw a dinner party was to lead our guests from drinks in the living room of one apartment, out the front door and ten feet down the hall, to the dining room of the other.

But it was a good place for us at the time, only five blocks from my work and inexpensive by Manhattan standards. And the best part was the access we had to the roof, up the iron staircase between our apartments. Over the trees, you could see the yellow pile of Stuyvesant Town to the east, the dip in rooftops that marked Gramercy Park to the west, the river's edge to the south, and the foothills of thirty-story buildings and peaks of sixty-story buildings marching northward like Himalayas to the horizon.

It was there on the roof, back and forth on the silver-painted tar, that I'd walk with Faith on my shoulder after Lorena had fed her. Sometimes I'd try to comfort her by singing in the tuneless croak no one else has ever been willing to endure (folk songs seemed to work best, the more lugubrious the better). Sometimes I'd try reciting long, droning passages of Victorian parlor verse (Tennyson worked fairly well, but—and this still worries me a little—Swinburne was unfailing). And sometimes I'd just mumble rhythmic nonsense in that low, reassuring voice that seems to bubble up naturally in nearly every man suddenly presented with a colicky baby and told to walk with her until she's calm. Eventually it formed into a mantra, chanted over and over while I patted her back: "She's such a good girl. Such a good girl. And she's very, very brave. True-hearted, pure-minded, and she spends her days thinking high and noble thoughts."

I'd nearly forgotten those words, but they've come back to gnaw at me a little, as Faith approaches three and the question of her schooling begins to seem slightly less, um, academic. From the ceaseless conversation

among other parents, my wife and I have learned all about education in Washington, D.C.: the good schools and the bad schools, the exorbitant and the merely expensive, the orthodox Catholic and the heretical Catholic, the hippie and the traditional. I would have thought we had plenty of time to decide, but one concerned friend points out that if we don't act soon, we'll never get Faith on a first-class waiting list. Another advises immediate enrollment in preschool so Faith will have some credentials for her applications.

But even to our fellow parents I have trouble posing the questions that come to mind when I think about schooling—and I can't imagine how to ask them of principals and teachers. Where, after all, does one send a child to educate her in bravery and pure-mindedness? What school offers instruction in true-heartedness? Who now teaches the nobility of thought?

The trouble is that I know exactly what I want Faith's education to provide her. I want a daughter who can do metaphysics and play the lute. Who can ride a horse and recite Shakespeare. Who gets a little teary-eyed at John Greenleaf Whittier's "Barbara Frietchie." Who can bake a cherry pie and shoot a six-gun. Who would dress up as a highwayman and ride out to steal the death warrant from the king's postman to save her father's life. Who can balance a checkbook and dig through the toolbox to find the missing three-eighths bit for the variable-speed drill. Who says her prayers at night. Who is equally at home (as Robert Graves boasted he had been) dining with kings and selling lemonade on the streets of Haifa.

Over the past two years, Lorena has become interested in teaching our daughter ourselves, and she's investigated all the data about reading ability and math scores. But a single fact has brought me around to think she's right about home-schooling Faith. In the midst of America's endless argument about charter schools and vouchers, parental choice and teachers' unions, I hear almost no one asserting that one of the things education should aim at is to produce children who have what Aristotle called a great soul.

I can't pretend my wife and I have much idea of how to go about that. But home-schooling still seems worth trying, if only because we haven't discovered many professional teachers who have much idea either—or many who believe even in the possibility of great souls anymore. Lorena can teach Faith baking and horseback riding, and I can teach her "Barbara Frietchie." All we really need is some help with the lute.

J. Bottum

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Medicare Reform— It's Not Just for Seniors

by Alan F. Holmer

You won't see cystic fibrosis on any list of diseases of aging— the average life expectancy of cystic fibrosis patients is 33. Yet the nation's 30,000 cystic fibrosis patients could be profoundly affected by the outcome of the current Medicare debate. That's why I care about this issue so passionately—both as president and CEO of an association representing research-based pharmaceutical companies and as a parent.

My son, Scott, and my daughter, Joy, both have cystic fibrosis. It's the most common fatal genetic disease in the United States, and it's a very cruel disease that clogs the lungs of its victims with suffocating mucous. When my son was born, my wife and I were told that he likely wouldn't live past 18. He's now 20, a college sophomore, and remarkably healthy—as is his 17-year-old sister. Just in my children's lifetimes, there's been a remarkable improvement in the treatment and outlook for cystic fibrosis patients. Why? In large part because pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies have developed new weapons against this disease.

They haven't cured it—yet. But the gene that causes the disease has been identified, and research looks very promising. Pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies are currently testing 11 more medicines for cystic fibrosis. I'm confident that a cure will be found in my lifetime. The more important question is: will a cure be found in time to help my children and thousands of other children like them?

The answer to my kids' life-threatening disease may depend, in large part, on how we fix Medicare. Let me explain.

It takes hundreds of millions of dollars to discover and develop just one new medicine. In order to attract that level of investment—especially since the odds against developing a blockbuster drug are staggering—a company needs to be profitable. And under some of the plans proposed for Medicare, companies would be less profitable. That means they would attract less investment money that could be used to discover and develop new medicines. Would they just go out of business? Some smaller biotechnology companies might, but most large pharmaceutical companies would survive. Would they continue to develop new medicines? Of course. But some research projects would be shoved to the back burner, or shelved entirely. Maybe, just maybe, that would be the medicine my children are waiting for.

I realize that not everyone shares my concern about this particular disease. But just about everybody knows somebody with a disease that's crying out for a cure. A father with Alzheimer's disease. A daughter with juvenile rheumatoid arthritis. A sister with breast cancer. A friend with Lou Gehrig's disease. A neighbor or coworker with multiple sclerosis. Or maybe heart disease or stroke runs in your family and you're hoping for a cure before the disease strikes you.

Pharmaceutical companies are doing research on all of these diseases and more. Which of these research projects would you like to see pushed to the back burner?

It's a tough question. And if any of the proposed Medicare plans that involve price controls are passed, pharmaceutical companies would have to make some tough decisions.

I hope it never comes down to that. And it won't if Congress passes the plan that gives seniors access to the best medicines, while keeping the incentives for research strong. The bill currently on the table that would do this best is S.1895, a common-sense plan recently introduced by Senators Breaux, Kerrey, Frist and Hagel—two Democrats and two Republicans. This legislation would let seniors choose among competing private-sector plans, just as millions of working Americans, including members of Congress, do now. The government would pick up most of the premium, and low-income seniors would get special help. These plans would use market competition—not price controls—to improve quality and control costs. That means that the incentives for pharmaceutical research would remain strong. Which would be good news for my children, and your fathers and sisters and friends, and everybody who has or will ever get an uncured disease.

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No to Novak

The most remarkable aspect of Robert Novak's article on campaign finance reform was its many gross factual errors in regard to the current law, the debate's history, proposed changes, and Republican views ("The GOP and Campaign Finance," Jan. 17).

Novak contends that, following "little or no interest" on their part in the 1970s and 1980s, Democrats did not aggressively pursue campaign finance reform until after Republicans gained the majority in 1994. Some facts: (1) a Democrat-controlled Congress in 1971 passed the Federal Election Campaign Act (FECA) and the 1974, 1976, and 1979 FECA amendments that are the bulk of the laws we live under to this day; (2) in 1987-88, Senate Republicans, then in the minority, filibustered through the night during the course of fending off a record eight cloture votes on a taxpayer-funded spending limits scheme pushed by the Democratic majority; (3) in 1992, Senate Republicans sustained President George Bush's veto of the Democrats' taxpayer-funded spending limits scheme pushed by Senate majority leader George Mitchell and speaker of the House Tom Foley; (4) after nearly a month of floor debate and three more cloture votes, in 1993 the Senate passed the Democrats' bill again, the House followed soon after, and it took another Republican around-the-clock filibuster—barely six weeks before the great Republican victories of the 1994 election—to kill it. Novak completely misrepresents the debate dynamic.

There was no Republican "tossing and turning to find a rationale" for retaining a system the Democrats created in the 1970s post-Watergate frenzy. Our fight has been to keep Democrats and their few Republican collaborators from making the system worse. Novak says we need "clean hands" (via campaign finance reform) to have "less government, less spending, less regulation" which is essential to "change things." Here's a news flash for Novak: The "reform" scheme he supports would mean a bigger Federal Election Commission, a bigger FEC budget, and a torrent of new government regulations. No small irony there.

The McCain-Feingold show began in 1995 when the duo introduced, virtually verbatim, the Boren-Mitchell scheme (the two Democrats had retired) that Republicans had fought so hard against in the 1980s and early '90s. Novak is confused about the labor issue, which has nothing to do with their PACs but with their political activities funded out of compulsory-dues-filled union treasuries. McCain's supposed concession on the labor issue actually rolls back the puny protection union members currently have.

Novak urges Republicans to "come out against" taxpayer-funded subsidies currently pouring into presidential campaigns (with the notable exceptions of George W. Bush, Steve Forbes, and Orrin Hatch, who declined the U.S. Treasury

money, thereby saving taxpayers millions) in what he calls a "daring political move," but one that is unlikely because "Republicans obviously don't want to give up that money." Novak should be thrilled to discover that Republicans have waged this battle for over a decade through bills and amendments ranging from outright repeal of postal subsidies and candidate and convention funding, to shifting the funds to child nutrition programs and changing the tax check-off to an "add-on" so it comes from the filer's refund instead of diverting the money from the Treasury. "But Congress keeps appropriating the money," says Novak. Not true. The check-off is an entitlement program, automatically diverting those funds from the Treasury. Novak must have missed my many editorials supporting the check-off program's repeal and urging people to check "no."

Novak and I agree that the circa-1974 $1,000 contribution limit on hard money is strangling campaigns. Novak writes: "If it were up to me I'd remove the limits altogether. But that won't happen." So we should turn around and ban soft money, which is the only recourse for political parties starved for hard money? That is irrational.

Novak's view on campaign finance reform is no doubt heartfelt, as evidenced by the considerable newsprint he has devoted to it over the years. But his view is wrong, and, judging from the glaring inaccuracies in his article, based in large part on misinformation. The truth is that the McCain-Feingold scheme, like the Boren-Mitchell scheme which preceded it, is wrong for America and wrong for Republicans. It would have fit in quite nicely in the old Soviet Union.

Sen. Mitch McConnell
(R-KY)
Washington, DC

The Science of Sludge

While Bonner R. Cohen is correct in accusing the Environmental Protection Agency of too often playing fast and loose with science, he falls victim to the same ("Environmentalists vs. Scientists," Jan. 17). Cohen cites the case of David Lewis, a 29-year career EPA scientist and whistle-blower who opposed the EPA's approval of using municipal sludge as fertilizer. Cohen, unfortunately, is just one of several conservative think-tank analysts who are making Lewis a *cause célèbre*. Ironically, in their rush to embrace a real, live EPA whistle-blower, these conservative critics of the EPA have let their politics cloud their discernment of the science—the exact charge they level at the EPA.

Scientific data show that sludge is safe. The EPA tested this substance for 10 years, tracking 14 different pathogens in the soil and air before correctly approving its use as a fertilizer. Still, Lewis hypothesizes that the use of sludge as fertilizer "could trigger a host of illnesses." Conversely, Charles Hagedorn, Virginia Tech professor of crop and soil sciences,

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says: "I can't give you an example of where there are health problems. Science has looked. They simply aren't there." I've considered Hagedorn's comments carefully because I live in Clarke County, Virginia, where sludge is applied to farm fields and where he monitors three streams and several wells in the county. According to Hagedorn, data show 99 percent of all pathogens are eliminated when filtered through 12 to 18 inches of soil.

Cohen's article cites a Centers for Disease Control (CDC) investigation in Boulder County, Ohio, that looked into the "severe illnesses coal miners are suffering after exposure to sludge applied for mine reclamation." My colleague at the Hudson Institute's Center for Global Food Issues, Richard Halpern, is familiar with the CDC report. He notes that the coal miners were in fact sludge applicators. Therefore, they were not casually exposed to sludge, but rather, directly handling it. Their severe illnesses were, to be more precise, occasional diarrhea and abdominal cramps. Ultimately the CDC recommended "standard hygiene" for these workers—including the wearing of gloves when handling sludge and the washing of hands before eating—to avoid future problems. In other words, the same common-sense precautions any weekend gardener would follow to handle potting soil, compost, or lawn fertilizer.

The EPA does indeed have a record of politicizing decisions that should be based on scientific data. But the evidence suggests that the approval of bio-solids is not such a case. It's incorrect to assume Lewis is right simply because he's an EPA whistle-blower.

DAVE JUDAY
Center for Global Food Issues
Berryville, VA

ALL KEYED UP

TUCKER CARLSON'S ARTICLE on Alan Keyes left me with the keen sense that not only does the Keyes phenomenon rub the elite liberal media the wrong way, but the conservative elitist media as well ("Keyes to the Presidency," Jan. 24).

I've been paying attention to the media's uneven handling of the Republican primary race with great dismay, and have become quite fatigued at how even your magazine has decided to ignore what's happening "below the noise level" the elite media have preordained as "relevant" political activity. You obviously couldn't ignore Keyes any longer once he broke into the "double-digit" category in the polls. After reading Carlson's ridicule of Keyes's successful grass-roots campaign, I wonder why he is loath to accept the support this presidential candidate is garnering—at the grass-roots level. Certainly I agree that Keyes is an incredible orator. But Carlson attempts to base Keyes's current success on some kind of emotional response from rapt listeners.

This is where he is wrong and where I, as a supporter of Keyes, am personally offended. I don't dispute that Keyes puts his competitors to shame whenever they share a stage. But I don't support Keyes because he is a great orator. What Carlson seems not to want to understand—or admit—is that Keyes supporters "get the message." They understand the crux of the key issues facing America because Keyes boils them down to their essence. And it appears to me that this strikes fear in the Republican party leadership.

I gravitate to Ambassador Keyes because of his lucid thoughts, ideas, and vision for America which are derived from clear, basic principles. I'm waiting for Bush and McCain to show at least a fraction of Keyes's principled insight, but I'm not hopeful.

ROSALYN BELLIS
Alexandria, VA

• • •

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Gertrude Himmelfarb
ONE NATION, TWO CULTURES

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PAUL JOHNSON, Commentary

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the weekly Standard

Silence of the Lambs

It is curious indeed when a president can review the state of our nation for nearly 90 minutes, propose dozens of new ways for the government to spend billions of dollars, yet fail to utter a single word about the need for an increase in defense spending.

Thursday night, the president again revealed himself the master of the minutiae of domestic policy, doling out small sums to develop the Delta in Mississippi and to discourage deadbeat dads in Minnesota. Americans in uniform—just another interest group in the White House's reckoning—got no more than a pat on the back for helping the administration conduct the air war over Kosovo.

Clinton's Capitol Hill audience doesn't have much room to complain. Through the Clinton years, congressional Republicans have been complicit in the neglect that is sapping American military strength to the point where a majority of the Joint Chiefs of Staff now admit their services are not up to the demands of the national military strategy.

The silence from the White House and the Capitol has been matched by the Republican presidential candidates. The men struggling to present themselves as the heirs to Ronald Reagan all say that reasserting American leadership and rebuilding U.S. armed forces are among their top priorities. But they seem to want to achieve the ends without devoting the means. George W. Bush wants to sustain an "era of American preeminence" and John McCain to extend the current "unipolar moment . . . for as long as we possibly can." But neither has made a case for the significant increase in defense spending that American primacy would require.

The silence of American political leaders on national defense is even more startling given the soaring federal budget surpluses. As we set new records for prosperity—as the president noted, next month will mark the longest period of economic growth in American history—defense spending's share of the economy has fallen to Depression-era levels. Indeed, a good portion of the credit for our economic well-being should go to the U.S. armed forces. Not only did they win the peace that made the prosperity of the 1990s possible, but this new economic era depends on worldwide security guarantees underwritten by American military power.

Domestically, the government's fiscal health is the result of increased tax revenues and a decade of restrained federal spending, the vast majority of which is due to cuts in defense spending. Indeed, almost the entire reduction in the federal workforce touted by the president comes from cutting the armed services. "Reinventing government" is a euphemism for cutting the size of the armed forces.

Defense spending is now far below the requirements of American strategy and global leadership. When it first came to power, the Clinton administration sliced $162 billion from the final five-year Bush defense plan. The Pentagon has never recovered. It is now billions short in needed modernization funds; its forces are increasingly ill-prepared for combat; and its troops and families are demoralized by a slipping quality of life and an increased pace of operations that a larger force would be needed to handle.

Not only have American armed forces suffered from more than a decade of neglect; projected defense budgets are too low to maintain today's military, let alone to make up for past cuts. The Brookings Institution's Michael O'Hanlon has calculated that $27 billion per year would be necessary simply to tread water. The Congressional Budget Office pegs the gap at $37 billion or more, and is readying a comprehensive new study likely to increase that estimate. The most detailed analysis, completed recently by the Center for Strategic and International Studies—a think tank soon to be headed by John Hamre, now deputy secretary of defense—concluded that the Pentagon needs as much as $100 billion more per year.

These funding problems have left the Joint Chiefs of Staff scrambling to perform their mission. Combat readiness rates continue to plummet: The two Army divisions now on duty in the Balkans recently were graded at the lowest state of readiness, and none of the Army's ten divisions is fully prepared for war. By contrast, all the units sent to the Gulf War achieved the highest readiness ratings. Meeting tomorrow's needs poses an even greater problem. The Pentagon has deferred almost $1 trillion in weapons buys; on the current path this "procurement bow wave" will grow to exceed $3 trillion by 2020. Problems of this magnitude will not be solved by marginal defense budget increases.

In this time of plenty, the long-term needs of national security deserve at least as much attention as the long-term needs of the Social Security and Medicare programs or the public's desire for lower taxes. Instead, from the White House, Capitol Hill, and the campaign trail, the silence is deafening.

—William Kristol

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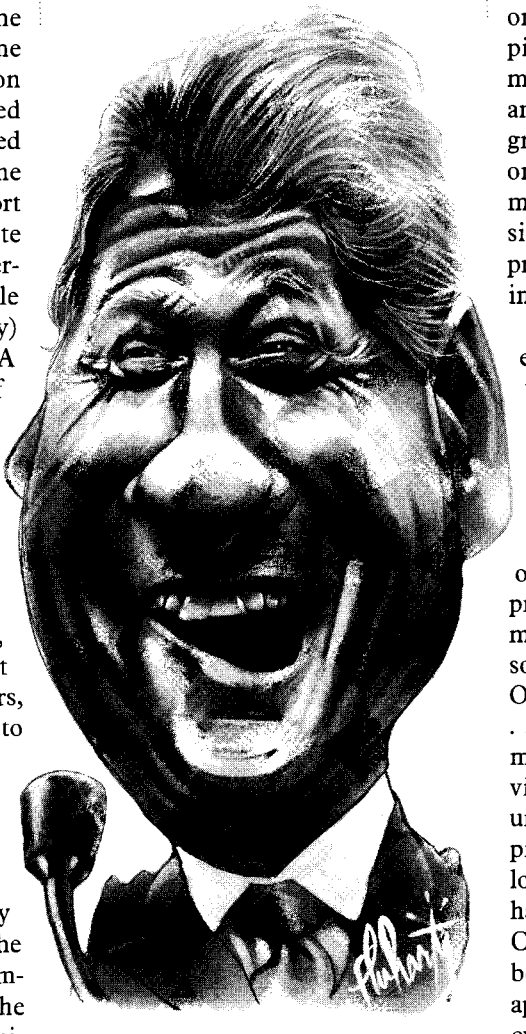
Bill Clinton's Last Gasp

The State of the Union as laundry list . . . a very long and artful one. BY ANDREW FERGUSON

PRESIDENT CLINTON gave his final State of the Union address last week. Watching it and then reading it, one couldn't help but recall that many, many years ago, in the dimly remembered recesses of time that historians call the pre-Clinton era, presidential speechwriters faced an annual dilemma. Custom required the president to give a State of the Union address that surveyed, in a sort of "laundry list," the nearly infinite tasks the federal government undertakes each year. But rhetorical style (not to mention speechwriter vanity) demanded something else entirely. A presidential speech, in the view of presidential speechwriters, should be interesting: brief, if possible, but coherent in any case, all of a piece, its various elements interlocked, united in a single theme.

How to resolve these competing demands—of the laundry list, on one hand, and of rhetorical unity, on the other—was a difficulty that bedeviled countless speechwriters, slaving away their January nights to write the annual address.

President Clinton has found a way out of this difficulty; he finds a way out of every difficulty. In general, the president's method is to resolve uncomfortable choices by ignoring them altogether, and this he has done with the traditional dilemma presented by the State of the Union. Gone is any pretense of a unifying theme. For the last seven years he has offered up speeches that defy every convention of the speechmaker's art. They are astonishingly long, radically discontinuous in structure, lacking transitions or any other kind of connective tissue, sprawling this way and



that—every year it is a jumble, an eruption, a mess. This isn't laziness on the president's part, or a refusal to submit to discipline. This is what works. Many of the dignitaries on the floor of the House of Representatives might look dutiful or even bored. But the president doesn't mind. The speeches are hugely successful. The laundry list, it turns out, is perfectly suited for conveying the essence of Clintonism.

This year's speech, though longer than its predecessors, was faithful to the form as the president has established it. It began with a few minutes devoted to the country's sterling condition, with the sly implication that the president himself is responsible for the happy news, and it closed on a brief note of Reaganite poetry, with mountaintops and rising suns and frontiers of endless possibility and so on. In between came the great flopping body of the speech, an 80-minute-long inventory of programs and initiatives. Very few of these programs and initiatives are related to one another, and no great effort is made to establish a connection. They simply come pouring out from the president, bit following bit, delivered in his most emphatic style.

Normally this would be considered rhetorical suicide. But one of the president's great insights has been to understand that nobody really listens to a State of the Union speech. Viewers let it hum in the background as they balance their checkbooks or put the kids to bed or wash the dishes. The policies and programs wash over them like mood music . . . and they half-hear . . . something about the White House Office of One America . . . hummmm . . . and the GEAR UP program to mentor youth . . . and then the Individual Development Accounts . . . until . . . inevitably . . . they hear the president announce a program tailored for *them*. And this makes them happy. No initiative emerges from the Clinton White House without having been polled and submitted to the approval of focus groups. That a policy will be popular with someone is guaranteed; the trick is to ensure that all the viewers will find something just for them.

And they do! They always do! The president has mastered the art of politics in an age of contentment, when most people see little use or need for

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Illustration by Thomas Fluharty

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politics. He knows that human beings are never perfectly content. The best chance a politician has of seeming consequential, therefore, is to scan the electorate, isolate the tiny grievances and niggling wants that bedevil it, make the problems seem urgent by the heat of his rhetoric, and then express his intention to make everyone whole. The president's skill in this regard is almost supernatural. It explains those otherwise puzzling polls, which show that a large majority of Americans consider Bill Clinton to be at once thoroughly untrustworthy and marvelously empathetic ("cares about people like you," as the pollsters put it).

Each problem gets its own initiative; each initiative gets its own sentence, and sometimes two, in the State of the Union address. Is Grandma camped out in the spare bedroom? The president will triple the tax credit for "long-term care." Are you worried, as a woman, that your salary is too low? The president offers the Paycheck Fairness Act so you can sue. Don't get a 401(k) at work? Have a Retirement Savings Account, in which the president will match your contribution dollar for dollar, just like a real boss should. Are you having trouble sending your kid to college? You shouldn't have to tighten your belt—use a tax credit instead. The president is concerned that your house is too far from your office; all that driving might make you sleepy! So he has 220,000 new housing vouchers to help you "live closer to the workplace." Child care, violent TV shows, prescription drugs, your car's low gas mileage—America, the president is on the case. He knows your concerns, and he has nationalized them.

This policy bedlam reflects an even deeper insight of the president's. Bill Clinton is a liberal who sought office when "interest-group liberalism" was presumed dead. The groups that it traditionally fed upon—labor unions, the racially or ethnically self-conscious, the legally disenfranchised—were either shrinking or losing their luster. But the president understood that everyone could be an interest group, including those people, most of them in the otherwise contented middle-class, who never thought of themselves as belonging to one. People who think they're underpaid could be an interest group (a really big one!). People with college kids could be an interest group. People with sick parents could be an interest group. People who dislike strip malls—people who hate traffic jams—*people who want to live closer to their offices*—all, all could be divided into interest groups, if only the government would address them as such.

Of course, some things get neglected when the president describes the state of the union in this way. Foreign policy, for example, took up fewer than four of the speech's eighty-nine minutes. Toward the close he said, "Our final challenge is the most important: to pass a national security budget. . ." So important is it, indeed, that the president devoted an entire sentence to it—only three fewer than the four sentences he devoted to suburban sprawl.

And in speaking of the defense budget he took an odd detour. Peering up into the gallery, eyes glistening, his jaw working diligently, the president singled out a quite beautiful woman in a camera-friendly red dress. She was the wife of Bill Cohen, the secretary of defense. "I want to thank Janet," the president said, "who more than any other American citizen has tirelessly traveled this world to show support for our troops. Thank you, Janet Cohen. I appreciate it. Thank you. Thank you."

Once again the president had taken this most traditional of presidential speeches in a new direction, one that would have occurred only to him. On the House floor, Bill Cohen looked neither dutiful nor bored. He looked worried. ♦

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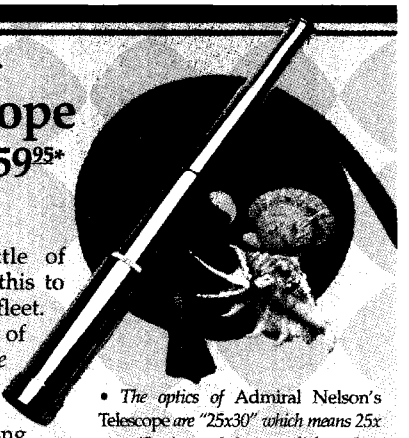

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Keyes, Bauer, and the Mosh Pit

The hard right, stuck between hard rock and a hard place. BY JOHN PODHORETZ

Alan Keyes

Gary Bauer

both photos: AP/Wide World Photos

IT MAY NOT RIVAL Quemoy and Matsu or even Willie Horton in the annals of campaign sensations, but rarely has such an incomprehensible issue been raised during a presidential debate. Midway through last week's Republican set-to in New Hampshire, Gary Bauer turned to Alan Keyes and asked a challenging question that basically went as follows: *Just what do you think you were doing in that mosh pit accompanied by Rage Against the Machine in the service of Michael Moore?*

Whereupon Republican voters turned to their loved ones and spake thus: "Huh?"

Here's what they were wondering:

(1) What on earth is a "mosh pit"?

(2) Rage against *which* machine?

(3) Isn't Michael Moore the lawyer in Mississippi who sued the tobacco companies? What's he got to do with this?

This incomprehension in the midst of a presidential debate is not, in and of itself, a bad thing. Indeed, you could almost say that after five content-challenged GOP debates, it had finally happened—two candidates had begun to discuss the sort of policy arcana once reserved during Cold War days for foreign-policy and defense discussions about the relative throw-weights of intercontinental ballistic missiles and the illegality of the phased-array radars around Krasnoyarsk.

Alas, Gary Bauer and Alan Keyes had not ascended to matters of the highest national import. Instead, they had descended together into the fever swamps of American pop culture—which are so vast and powerful these days that a band no adult has ever heard of can sell seven million albums, and a parlor Marxist with a flop cable television show can talk the most intellectually severe GOP presidential candidate into a publicity stunt whose sole purpose was to make the candidate in question look like a fool.

The parlor Marxist in question is rabble-rousing documentarian and professional conservative-hater Michael Moore. For a segment on his latest cable show, *The Awful Truth*, Moore announced he would endorse any Republican candidate who agreed to enact a common piece of rock-concert stagecraft called "stage diving" for his cameras. All the candidate had to do was stand on a flatbed truck and fall backward onto the upraised arms of a crowd of 50 people behind him.

At an actual concert, the area into which rock performers and audience members alike do their stage diving is known as the "mosh pit." (The term "moshing" refers to a charming form of interpersonal conduct at hard-rock concerts where audience members—mostly white teenage boys with no rhythm and a lot of hostility—smash their bodies into one another in lieu of actual dancing.)

Alan Keyes agreed to participate in Moore's stunt—and for being such a good sport got called "certifiably insane" by Moore, who told the press he had "never seen anything this bizarre." Plus which, Moore played a dirty trick on Keyes by using as

Contributing editor John Podhoretz's column on the 2000 campaign appears Tuesdays and Fridays in the New York Post.

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accompaniment to his mosh-pit stunt a song by that seven-million-selling band known to no adult, Rage Against the Machine. Moore's purpose was clear: Embarrass Keyes by associating him with the band that, more than any other, represents everything cultural conservatives fear and revile.

Rage Against the Machine is one of the most successful rock acts of the past decade—its third album, *The Battle for Los Angeles*, debuted at No. 1 on the *Billboard* charts the week it was released in November and has already gone double platinum. The band's music amalgamates rap and hard rock in a particularly harsh way, producing the sort of earsplitting sound that hits 15-year-olds in some sweet spot that vanishes right around the time these same kids have to start paying their own bills.

But forget aesthetics for a moment. Forget even the band's liberal use of profanity, although Keyes made a point of attacking John McCain a few weeks earlier after the Arizona senator said something positive about the hard-rock band Nine Inch Nails, whose lyrics rival anything McCain ever heard aboard an aircraft carrier. (McCain apologized.) More to the point, Rage Against the Machine comprises four guys who are—let me be precise here—commies. The "machine" against which they "rage" is capitalism, and their goal is its overthrow, though it's hard to say these days who would do the overthrowing.

Says lead singer Zack de la Rocha, "We've all been put to sleep . . . by a system that would rather see all of you at that bar . . . being put to sleep with beer or with drugs, rather than acting against it and fighting a system which has been perpetrating imperialist lies and other f—ing bulls— for five hundred years."

The band's second album, *Evil Empire*, and its DVD offer detailed reading lists for fans intended to wake them up, lists that include *Das Kapital*, Lenin's *State and Revolution*, *The Anarchist Cookbook* (with its notorious "how to make a Molotov cocktail" recipe), not to mention works by Che Guevara, Herbert Marcuse, Frantz Fanon, Noam Chomsky, and Huey Newton—and my personal favorite, *Chicana Lesbians: The Girls Our Mothers Warned Us About*. (Lead guitarist Tom Morello graduated from Harvard in 1986 and worked as scheduling secretary for then-senator Alan Cranston of California.)

In the past two months, the band has come under fire from the Fraternal Order of Police for its heated defense of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the Black Panther who gunned down Officer Daniel Faulkner on a Philadelphia street in 1981. They've written two numbers ("songs" hardly seems the right word for them) about Mumia, whom they consider a "political dissident," just as they consider Indian activist Leonard Peltier—who killed two FBI agents in 1975—an American Sakharov. At a benefit concert in Philadelphia's First Union Center on December 6, de la Rocha demanded of his audience, "Shouldn't political dissidents in *this* country enjoy the same rights that the U.S. government demands for political dissidents in China or Iran?"

While de la Rocha was prattling on, hundreds of police officers marched in protest, and a week later the Fraternal Order of Police called for a boycott of the First Union Center, which had booked the concert. The First Union Center is the venue for the Republican National Convention, to be held in August. The FOP has asked the Republican National Committee to move the convention unless the First Union Center's name is changed to the Daniel Faulkner Memorial Center. The RNC has not responded.

So this was the backdrop to Gary Bauer's frontal attack on Alan Keyes last week.

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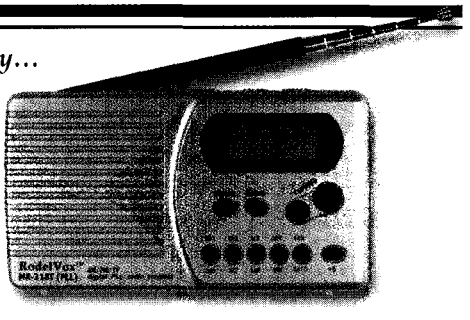

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"That band is anti-family," Bauer said to Keyes. "It's pro-cop killer, and it's pro-terrorist. It's the kind of music that the killers at Columbine High School were immersed in. . . . Don't you think you owe an apology to parents and policemen on that one?"

On the one hand, Keyes's response was appropriate and proper: "When you can't control things, Gary, you're not morally responsible for them. And I was not morally responsible for the music that was playing as I stepped out of my rally and faced Michael Moore, whatever his name was, doing whatever he was doing. . . . And until you told me this fact, I had no idea what that music was." On the other hand, Keyes once again showed he was not above playing the race card whenever it suits his fancy: "Accusing me of having some complicity in that music would be accusing me of, I don't know, being responsible for the color of my skin."

And then, showing the improvisatory skill that has made him the most entertaining figure in the pre-primary season, Keyes reached into his bag of rhetorical tricks and found an epiphany straight outta Tocqueville:

"Admittedly, I was willing to fall into the mosh pit, but I'll tell you something. You know why I did that? Because I think that exemplifies the kind of trust in people that is the heart and soul of the Keyes campaign. It's about time we got back to the understanding that we trust the people of this country to do what's decent. And when you trust them, they will in fact hold you up, whether it's in terms of giving help to you when you're falling down or caring for their own children."

The entire exchange may have puzzled the nation—or the fragment of the nation that was watching the debate. But one gets the distinct sense that somewhere in the empyrean, Lincoln and Douglas were watching as well. And weeping—though whether from laughter or despair, it would be impertinent to hazard a guess. ♦

Why the GOP Nominee May Lose

Al will gore Bush or McCain with this formula: *Roe*, race, and recklessness. BY FRED BARNES

PRESIDENT CLINTON has given George W. Bush (or whoever wins the Republican presidential nomination) a taste of what's to come. Now it can be told, Clinton informed a crowd of Democrats in Los Angeles on January 22. Bush "doesn't believe in *Roe* v. *Wade*," and thus if he's elected, legalized abortion will be "scrapped." Democrats "should make sure that everybody knows where everybody else is coming from in this deal," Clinton said. And the deal is that, should Bush win, what Democrats call "a woman's right to choose"—they never say the word "abortion"—will be gone.

Clinton was actually being gentle, but that won't last. His message was that Democrats should pummel Bush (or John McCain) on abortion. And you can bet they will. Sure, Bush has never declared, publicly anyway, that he wants to see *Roe* overturned. All he's noted is that the Supreme Court "overreached," a common view. Though pro-life, he's made it clear he doesn't want to get ahead of public sentiment on abortion. True, he's for banning abortion, but only when a solid pro-life majority emerges in America and not a moment before. This fine-tuning of his position won't matter to Clinton, Al Gore, and practically every other Democrat. They'll attack him for trying to force women into back-alley abortions or worse. The assaults will be crude, dishonest, and relentless.

Here's the point: Bush isn't ready to fight off such attacks, much less turn the abortion issue to his advantage. The same is true for McCain. Both appear uncomfortable in the extreme discussing abortion. Their response is to cite their "pro-life record" and mention their tolerance of those who disagree. They describe their position without justifying it or seeking to persuade anyone of its rightness. In a New Hampshire debate on January 26, McCain gave the same defensive response twice ("proud of my pro-life record") when questioned by Alan Keyes. Bush was every bit as robotic, insisting he's been "a pro-life governor" who has promoted abstinence and adoption and recognizes "good people can disagree on this issue."

There's a larger point in all this: Republican prospects for the presidency are worse than they appear. After Gore's smashing victory over Bill Bradley in the Iowa caucuses, it became conventional wisdom that he'll be a strong challenger to Bush or McCain in the fall. A new *Wall Street Journal*/NBC poll showing Bush ahead by a mere three points reflected this. But the poll did *not* reflect how the issue agenda, the campaign strategies, the skill of the candidates, and the condition of the country now favor Gore.

Roe, race, and recklessness—those are the tools of attack for Gore. Bush and McCain aren't any better at deflecting attacks on race than they are on *Roe*. They're so lame, in fact, that Gore now includes in his stump speech a riff condemning them for refusing to call for removing the Confederate battle flag from atop the South Carolina capitol. Like Clinton's mild criticism on abortion, this is a precursor to inflammatory, race-bait-

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ing attacks by Gore and other Democrats. In 1998, they blamed Republicans for church burnings and said GOP candidates intended to roll back civil rights laws. The attacks were over the top, but they worked. Now, neither Bush nor McCain seems ready to reply aggressively.

McCain may think he's off the hook on economic recklessness because his proposed tax cut is so puny, but he's not. Gore will simply turn to McCain's boast that he's voted for every tax cut possible as a member of Congress, notably the $792 billion cut that Clinton vetoed last year. As for Bush, Gore is already raising a stink about his tax cut. It's a "scheme" to enrich the wealthy that would put America's prosperity at risk, Gore says. There's a response to this that scores of Republican candidates could give. But Bush, at the moment, isn't one of them. Rather than defend his tax cut, he's chosen to go after the flaws in McCain's and insist that he, Bush, is for paying down the national debt, too. He'll have to do better than that against Gore.

And he'll have to do better on the Democratic staples of health care, education, Social Security, and Medicare as well. Unfortunately for Republicans, these issues will be front and center this fall. Gore's positions are hardly unassailable. What Clinton did in his State of the Union address, Gore does in his standard campaign speech. For Gore, one policy fits all: No reform, no belt-tightening, just throw money. This makes Gore vulnerable, but only if Bush or McCain offers compelling alternatives and rips his policy apart.

Neither has a capacity to do that now, and it wouldn't be easy in any case. The political mood in the country has shifted to the left, slightly but perceptibly, in the past several years. The public's animus against federal spending and Washington has diminished. Bush's "compassionate conservatism" is a clever adjustment to the new mood. The trouble is, Bush hasn't been very adept at fleshing it out in an appealing way—or in any other way, for that matter. Just uttering the phrase "compassionate conservative" isn't enough. Bush has occasionally been good at explaining his education reforms, though you'd never know it from his feeble response in the January 26 debate to Steve Forbes about his record as Texas governor. As for McCain, he is largely uninterested in domestic policy, and it shows.

Alan Keyes thinks Bush and McCain stumble because they lack a "digested" set of principles. Liberals like Gore have that, he argues, and it means they're never lost when policy discussions go beyond their talking points. They have an ideology to fall back on. "Somebody like George Bush can take a stand, but he can't defend that stand," says Keyes, who cites Bush's rambling answer to a question about what Jesus Christ would do on the death penalty, which Bush supports. Either Gore or Bradley, says Keyes, "has the ability to clean George Bush's clock, wipe up the floor with him."

Bush or McCain has got to take the fight to Gore on every issue, not just the moral lapses of the Clinton-Gore White House.

Keyes overstates the problem, but there *is* a problem. This isn't 1980 or 1994, years in which a candidate needed only an R beside his name to win. Some Bush advisers liken him to Ronald Reagan, and the analogy isn't entirely farfetched. Each came late to politics, has a glowing personality, was elected governor, and is constantly underestimated. But Reagan ran in a year when the nation was hell-bent on getting a new president. Jimmy Carter was wounded by a bitter primary fight with senator Teddy Kennedy that stretched all the way to the Democratic national convention. Gore isn't likely to face that problem with Bradley. Also, Reagan was aided by the fact that the United States was losing the Cold War to the Soviet Union and was suffering from double-digit inflation.

Which leads to another question Bush or McCain will have to answer: How exactly would he improve on the Clinton-Gore economic record? It's true that Clinton and Gore don't deserve the credit for the strong economy. But they have bragging rights. Bush has a tax cut to talk about, but he'll need a lot more to offset the dazzling numbers that Clinton tossed around in the State of the Union and Gore mentions in his speeches. As for McCain, he'd better change the subject to foreign and defense policy.

Despite Gore's advantages, don't count Bush or McCain out yet. What they've got to do is become tougher, better candidates and seize the initiative. This is possible. After all, three months ago, Gore was a laughingstock as a candidate, stiff, boring, and given to ridiculous claims. Now, he's the best candidate in the field—ruthless and resourceful, and not quite as grating as he once was. Bush has improved, too, particularly in debates, but he still has a long way to go to match Gore. So does McCain.

Defeating Gore will require Bush or McCain to go on the offensive and stay there. Against him, Bill Bennett's adage applies: In politics, when you're not on offense, you're on defense. They've got to take the fight to Gore on every issue, not just the moral lapses of the Clinton-Gore White House. Make Gore explain why he wants tax cuts for everyone but actual taxpayers. Make him justify his refusal to help black and Hispanic kids escape terrible inner city schools. Make him present a case for racial preferences.

And Bush or McCain must flip the abortion issue to his benefit. Hedging will only make things worse by raising doubts about his own character. And endlessly restating a position won't do either. The Republican candidate has got to force Gore to defend his position, especially his opposition to a ban on partial-birth abortion, to parental notification, and to a 24-hour waiting period. Otherwise, Gore wins the issue and probably the election. ♦

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Al Gore, Midnight Toker

Unlike Bill Clinton, the vice president inhaled—a lot, according to an old buddy. **BY MATTHEW REES**

ON NOVEMBER 6, 1987, Al Gore was in the middle of his first campaign for president, seeking the support of a black political group in Montgomery, Alabama, when he was asked a simple question: Had he ever used marijuana? "Have I ever smoked it as an adult? The answer is no. Did I try it when I was a college student? My personal opinion is that is an inappropriate question."

The questioning didn't stop there, though, as a Supreme Court nominee, Douglas Ginsburg, had just made national headlines by admitting he'd smoked marijuana while a professor at Harvard Law School (Ginsburg's nomination was withdrawn shortly thereafter). After flying to Miami that night for Florida's state Democratic convention, Gore met with campaign advisers to hash out a strategy for further disclosures. At 4:30 A.M., he called a state party press official and told him he wanted to hold a press conference at the Fountainbleau Hilton a little more than four hours later to elaborate on his history with marijuana.

Perhaps sensing his statements the day before hadn't been completely honest and candid, Gore opened the press conference by saying, "I'm going to be honest and candid in describing what was an insignificant matter for me in my life." He then admitted he'd smoked pot "several times" while a student at Harvard, "once or twice in the Army, once or twice as a graduate student." "I've never used anything beyond that. It was never a significant part of my life. It was infrequent and rare." Indeed, 15 years had passed since his last toke, said Gore. "I decided that it was wrong for me. When I became a man, I put away childish things." A few days later, he described his pot smoking as a "false experience," and told a group of donors that telling his children about it was "the single hardest thing I've ever done."

That put an end to the stories about Al Gore and marijuana for the rest of the 1988 presidential campaign. Indeed, so smoothly had Gore handled the matter that reporters considered it a non-issue in 1992 and 1996, and until last week it hadn't generated any interest during this campaign either.

But the story has now reemerged. One of Gore's close friends, a colleague from the *Tennessean*, the Nashville paper where Gore worked for four years until the age of 27, has come forward to say the vice president hasn't been "honest" or "candid" in characterizing his marijuana use. Indeed, the friend says Gore's use was neither "infrequent" nor "rare." He also charges that Gore heavily lobbied him not to say anything when the issue came up in November 1987. Gore has contested some of the specific claims, like the lobbying, while saying of the alleged pot smoking, "There is nothing new about this." This non-denial denial is about as illuminating as Bill Clinton's famous response in 1992, "I didn't inhale."

John Warnecke first met Al Gore in 1970, when Gore's father was running for reelection to the Senate, and Warnecke was a reporter at the *Tennessean*. They couldn't have been more different: Gore, the strait-laced son of a senator, and Warnecke, a San Francisco native and former road manager for the Grateful Dead. But they shared an interest in music and politics, and they were both newlyweds. Gore left for Vietnam shortly after the election, and during the five months he was there, his wife, Tipper, spent a great deal of time in Nashville with Warnecke and his wife, Nancy, who shared an interest in photography. "We made our house open to her," recalls Warnecke.

Gore's first job upon returning from Vietnam was at the *Tennessean*, and it didn't take long for him and Warnecke to cement their friendship. Gore seemed to like Warnecke's easy-going ways. Al and Tipper even moved into the Warneckes' old house in a section of Nashville near David Lipscomb College. The two couples began socializing on weekends—the Warneckes lived just a block away—and Al and John saw each other almost daily in the *Tennessean* newsroom. "Through their wives, they seemed to be very good friends," recalls Andrew Schlesinger, a reporter at the paper in the early '70s and the son of historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr.

Warnecke's reputation at the paper was that of a California radical, and it was well deserved, given his leftist politics and his habit of smoking pot three to five times a week. Gore, who's said he suffered from disillusionment after his experience in Vietnam, began hanging out at Warnecke's house, and, according to Warnecke, getting high became a regular feature of their frequent get-togethers, even after Warnecke left the paper at the end of 1971. Warnecke was always the supplier—he had a number of friends from California in the smuggling business—and he and Gore tended to smoke potent forms of marijuana and hashish that had been dipped in opium. "He was probably pretty impressed with the stuff I had," laughs Warnecke, "as it was much stronger than what could be found in Tennessee."

Gore and Warnecke would often play basketball at the nearby college, and then light up in the living room of Warnecke's two-bedroom home. While enjoying their high, they'd talk politics and listen to everything from Otis Redding and Buffalo Springfield

Matthew Rees is a staff writer at THE WEEKLY STANDARD.

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Drew Friedman

to Janis Joplin and the Grateful Dead. If Tipper was present, she and Al would often insist on playing "Please Come to Boston" by Dave Loggins (a song one music journalist recently included on a list of the 100 worst hit singles of the 20th century). Gore and Warnecke would sometimes quiz each other on how they would vote on a variety of public-policy issues, such as defense spending. And they'd occasionally talk about legalizing marijuana, which they both favored.

Gore never advertised his pot smoking to his friends or colleagues, and Warnecke says the most amusing thing about their sessions was Gore's fear that they were being spied on. He always insisted they turn out the lights and close the curtains before sharing a joint, and there was an understanding that Warnecke would not talk about their activities with others (Gore was particularly fearful his father would find out).

Asked to estimate how many times he and Gore lit up together, Warnecke refuses to give a number, saying instead "a helluva lot," and notes it was enough for Gore to have his own roach clip. (Warnecke has kept it as a souvenir.) The pot smoking continued, says Warnecke, right up until February 1976, when Gore decided to run for Congress (the incumbent had abruptly announced he wouldn't seek reelection). Warnecke never smoked with Gore again, and was kept out of the campaign. "I became too hot," he says, "too much of a risk for him. He just sort of blocked me out."

Warnecke moved back to northern California in 1978, and spent the next six months in a rehabilitation center for alcoholics (he's been off drugs and alcohol for 21 years). Having cleaned himself up, he began working for his father, an architect who worked on the redesign of Lafayette Square, John F. Kennedy's grave, and a number of other landmarks. Gradually, Warnecke was reintegrated into Gore's world, and he began seeing Al and Tipper when they came to San Francisco (the Warneckes were divorced in 1980). Indeed, Warnecke often escorted Gore from one event to another, and in October 1987 he introduced him to the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s legendary gossip columnist, Herb Caen, at a cocktail party at the St. Francis Yacht Club.

When Gore launched his presidential campaign in 1987, Warnecke helped with fund-raising, and acted as a surrogate speaker, reassuring potential supporters that the Gores were not the pillars of comstockery they seemed (Tipper's crusade against explicit rock lyrics was unpopular among San Francisco Democrats). But nothing could have prepared him for the call he received from Gore one morning in November 1987.

Supreme Court nominee Douglas Ginsburg's marijuana use had just hit the media, and Gore wanted to talk with Warnecke about their pot smoking. Reporters were likely to be making inquiries, said a panicked Gore, "and you should tell them it's none of their business." Warnecke had never spoken with any journalists about Gore's marijuana use, but he says he told Gore he didn't agree with the stonewall strategy, and didn't think it would work. They argued back and forth for 10 minutes, with Warnecke assuring Gore he wouldn't do anything to hurt him, but an exasperated Gore ended the call. An hour later, Gore called back, and put more pressure on Warnecke not to disclose their marijuana use (Tipper weighed in as well). Warnecke reiterated his doubt about this strategy, and the call ended a few minutes later. Gore took one more stab at Warnecke that day, but made no more progress.

The three calls did, however, have an impact. Shortly afterwards, the *Tennessean* called Warnecke. Instead of fessing up about Gore's pot smoking, he said he knew of only one instance when Gore had lit up. The paper ran a story on November 10, 1987, quoting Warnecke to this effect, but emphasized that an internal investigation showed he was the only one of 40 colleagues or friends who said they'd seen Gore smoke pot (three declined comment). The apparent thoroughness of this article is one reason Gore's statements about his marijuana use have received little scrutiny. Warnecke counters that the investigation, and another one last week, was meaningless, given that Gore concealed his pot smoking from his colleagues.

The most interesting material in the article, however, was a condensed account of an episode from Gore's first race for Congress in 1976:

> Alan Carmichael, then a *Tennessean* reporter and now a TVA information spokesman, asked Gore if he had smoked marijuana while interviewing him on the general subject of pot laws during a brief car ride between campaign stops in 1976. Gore, who was driving, stopped the car and got out to think about the question, Carmichael said. He then got back in the car and questioned Carmichael about the appropriateness of the question.

Gore never had to answer the question, as Carmichael withdrew it, but the account highlights Gore's unease

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(LEFT TO RIGHT) EDWARD KENNEDY, GERALDO RIVERA, DAVID BONIOR, AL GORE, JANE FONDA, HILLARY CLINTON, PAUL WELLSTONE, AND JESSE JACKSON

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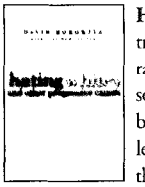

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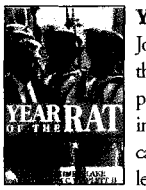

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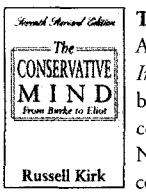

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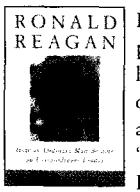

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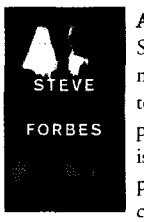

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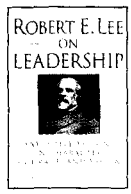

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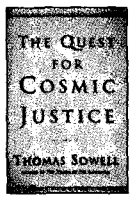

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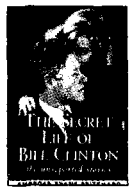

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Turning Liberal Ideas

continued from page 17
with talking about his marijuana use. Indeed, Warnecke says the two haven't spoken since the three calls in 1987. This freezing out only compounded Warnecke's guilt about the stonewall. "I sold my soul to Al," he says.

Some have doubted Warnecke's credibility, given his history of depression (he lives on disability in northern California, with his two teenage daughters). Schlesinger, his former colleague, who lives in New Hampshire and identifies himself as a "Gore supporter," won't address the specifics of the pot smoking allegations, but says "I always found John to be honest and idealistic." Warnecke says he's willing to submit to a lie-detector test.

So why is Warnecke coming forward now? He says he deeply regrets not having told the truth about Gore in 1987, at a time when "the public was making up its mind about Al." When he was approached in 1998 by Bill Turque, a *Newsweek* reporter writing a biography of Gore, he agreed to tell him his story (Warnecke says his therapist recommended he go public, as it would help him purge his guilt). The book is being published next month, and an excerpt detailing Warnecke's story was supposed to have been published in *Newsweek* two weeks ago. But the magazine retreated at the last minute, prompting Warnecke to grant interviews to a pro-drug-legalization group, Jake Tapper of *Salon*, and this magazine.

Gore's dismissal of the allegations has mostly succeeded in snuffing out press coverage. The issue has been raised on the Fox News Channel and the *Today* show (Katie Couric asked Gore about the allegations during his January 25 appearance), but the network news has given the story no airtime. As for the papers, the London *Daily Telegraph* ran a longer article than the *New York Times* or *USA Today*. The media, in other words, seem to agree with Gore, who said on January 24, "This is something I dealt with a long time ago. It's old news." Old it may be. But if Gore is willing to fudge on this, what else is he trying to hide? ♦

Retail Politics, Up Close and Personal

With Gore in Iowa and Bradley in New Hampshire. BY TUCKER CARLSON

Des Moines, Iowa

PERHAPS BECAUSE of some obscure government regulation, Al Gore's security guys aren't wearing coats. The temperature is hovering near zero in Des Moines, but the men in charge of securing the vice president's next campaign event have only thin polyester suits and mirrored sunglasses to protect them from the cold. Gore is supposed to arrive any minute and begin a short, very staged walk down a residential street, where he will knock on doors and meet voters. At the moment there are no actual voters in sight. Apart from the media horde, stamping its feet behind the rope line, the neighborhood is weirdly deserted, like a movie set.

Down a side street two members of Gore's security detail are taking a break from checking for bombs. One is on his haunches in the snow picking up a handful of discount brand cigarettes that have spilled out of his pocket. The cigarettes are wet and flecked with mud, but the guy's doing his best to get each one back into the pack. As his stiff hands fumble with the damp tobacco, a couple of warmly dressed, well-paid, smug-looking male reporters walk by. One of them has a ponytail and a couple of earrings. The other is wearing a state-of-the-art down parka with a fur-lined hood. The security guy whips around to see the reporters staring at him. He looks murderous.

There's a fair amount of crankiness at the Gore event. The wind has picked up, and Gore is more than an hour late. A cable news producer says she has heard that the vice president is parked in his idling limousine a mile away, watching a football game on television. It's probably not true—inconsiderate as Gore may be, he's not lazy—but most in the press gaggle seem happy to believe it.

The public, meanwhile, hasn't shown up either. Gore aides often brag about the campaign's grass-roots organizing, but whoever was in charge of today's event forgot to bus in the usual crowd of sign-waving supporters. A couple of animal rights protesters dressed in pig costumes pull up in a white convertible and make a brave attempt to get themselves on television. It doesn't work, and they leave. Then Gore arrives. Flanked by the coatless security men, he tramps up the front walk and knocks on the door of the first house on the street. A woman answers. Gore speaks to her for about 45 seconds before she closes the door and he heads to the next house. As it turns out, the woman and her husband are the local precinct captains for the Bush campaign.

Pretty embarrassing. The grand prize for bad Iowa advance work, though, almost certainly goes to Gary Bauer. The day before the caucuses, Bauer held an event at Glendale Cemetery in Des Moines. With cameras rolling, Bauer laid roses on the grave of "Baby Isaiah," a stillborn boy whose body was found dumped at a wastewater treatment plant several years ago. Bauer gave a speech about the sanctity of life, took questions from the press, then left. No one stayed behind to clean up.

By coincidence, a Bauer supporter

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named Steve Evans happened to be at Glendale that day to visit the grave of his grandson. Stampeding camera crews crushed the teddy bear Evans had left on the boy's headstone, before going on to commit numerous other acts of unintentional desecration. As the *Des Moines Register* put it the following day, "broken glass and cigarette butts littered the graves." The 68-year-old Evans promptly called reporters to say he was no longer planning to vote for Bauer. Then he contacted half a dozen other people whose family sites had been damaged, vowing to organize a kind of class action suit against the Bauer campaign. In all, it was not a successful event.

It's hard to imagine the Forbes campaign making a similar mistake. Forbes events are the best planned, best choreographed, and often best attended of the primary season. An Iowa voter could feed and clothe (in campaign T-shirts, anyway) a sizable family simply by following the Forbes bus around the state. Whether the family could stay awake is another question. Years of campaigning haven't done much for Forbes's speaking ability. He still drones and grins mechanically, incapable of the slightest ad lib. His hands have started to move a bit while he speaks, but the effect is more menacing than humanizing.

On caucus day, Forbes holds one of his last Iowa press conferences, on the sidewalk outside Scruffy's Pizza in downtown Des Moines. With two of his daughters at his side, Forbes gives his usual rap about the Evil Washington Elites. In person, Forbes comes off as a nice guy. He doesn't seem like the sort of vain eccentric billionaire who would routinely describe himself, improbably, as "a strong leader who has these bold new ideas." Alas, he turns out to be just that sort of person. Reporters listen for a few minutes, then lay in with the questions. Every one has the same theme: At what point will you be forced to give up this pathetic charade and slink back to New Jersey? Forbes, of course, is unfazed by suggestions that he won't soon be president; he ignores them every day. His poor daughters aren't as seasoned. They keep smiling. But if you look down you notice that both have clenched fists. The younger one is digging her thumbnail into her index finger.

Every campaign finance reform activist in the country ought to be required to spend a week following Steve Forbes around, not just as punishment, but also for the important lesson it would provide: In politics, money isn't everything. Forbes and Bill Bradley both spent huge amounts of money on advertising and organizing in Iowa, as much, maybe even more, than anyone in their respective parties. Both lost decisively. In the early primary states, the professionals agree, retail politics still matters.

Manchester, New Hampshire

On the other hand, if you've ever tried to have breakfast in the Merrimack Restaurant the week before the New Hampshire primary, you know why wholesale politics isn't so bad either. There is such a thing as being too close to candidates. After a few hours of it, you begin to long for inauthentic, slickly produced campaign ads.

Located on the main drag in Manchester, the Merrimack is your garden-variety New England diner (homey interior, mediocre food). One morning last week, the place was filled nearly to fire code violation with presidential candidates. Within the space of an hour, no fewer than four candidates showed up with press in tow. First came Gary Bauer, totally enveloped by the camera crews surrounding him. Then Alan Keyes arrived, orating and gesticulating as he walked from the hostess stand to the men's room and back. A number of Keyes volunteers came, too, passing out stickers and tracts about "tax slavery." One of them left a carton of Keyes buttons on the floor, which a cameraman, walking backwards to film Bill Bradley's arrival, later tripped over.

Bradley is the one candidate tall enough to be spotted above the boom mikes. Another reporter and I were sitting in a booth as he walked by. We were just digging into breakfast when the waitress arrived with two pots of coffee for refills. Except it wasn't the waitress. It was Senator Bob Kerrey of Nebraska, who had come to the Merrimack to stump for his friend Bradley, and in the meantime apparently decided to make himself useful. I asked for regular, my friend took decaf.

A few minutes later, Bradley himself came over. He shook our hands, then looked down at my plate. I thought I saw him crinkle his nose. "Be careful of all that bacon," he said.

The first thing that popped into my mind, of course, was, "Hey, pal, I'm not the one with the heart condition." But I didn't say it. Not till he left anyway. It struck me a few hours later that this is the real problem with retail politics. You can't tell a presidential candidate what you really think if he's standing right in front of you. ♦

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Our Bodies, Our Surgeons

Feminism in the Age of Body Worship.

By David Brooks

We're almost an hour into *The Vagina Monologues*, but so far, for some reason, I'm not really connecting with it. Eve Ensler has already performed many of the most popular vignettes from her one-woman play—the gynecological exam bit, the lesbian prostitute bit, the feminist onanism workshop bit. All around me, women are doubling over with laughter. It's like sitting in a bucket of live fish, bodies flopping all around. The fortyish woman in front of me with porcupine-moussed hair is throwing her head back and roaring so heartily I fear she's going to snap off at the neck. The leather lady next to me is rocking back and forth in glee. She's wearing black from head to foot—black leather boots, pants, jacket, two black leather bags—and all that cowhide is rolling and tossing like waves in a storm. The seventyish matrons with trim Catholic-school-bake-sale haircuts—they look like they came in from Long Island and got lost on their way to *Cats*—are whispering giddily to each other after each skit. Behind me, the women with the matching wind-tunnel facelifts are joyously stretching their new masks to the point where there's a real possibility that the staples in the backs of their heads will pop and I'll find myself sitting in a puddle of liberated jowls.

In short, everybody around me is having a rollicking good time. But I just can't get off the dime. I seem to be the only one in this crowd who doesn't think that if you say the word "vagina" 5,000 times in the space of an hour, it gets funnier each time.

It's not as if they've made me feel unwelcome. At least 10 percent of this audience is male (although as a group maybe not at the upper end of the testosterone bell curve). And when I handed the ticket taker my ticket, he gave me a big smile and greeting. He was wearing a button that said "Vagina Friendly" and a nametag that read "Vagina Bob." As he tore my ticket, his glance seemed to say, "Isn't it wonderful that we're supporting our feminist sisters?"

And it's not as if the show, in theory, should leave a person unmoved. Ms. Ensler is an attractive woman who sits up on stage in a revealing black nightgown talking dirty and moaning fake orgasms. All around the country, men are dialing those 900 numbers and paying several bucks a minute for this kind of performance. And the show has the feel of male pornography, from the stupid puns on the poster ("Think Outside the Box"), to the structure (a series of unrelated sexual encounters), to the worldview (women want to have sex all the time), to the underlying message of each episode (great sex is possible between people who have absolutely no emotional commitment to each other). But somehow I find Ms. Ensler's relentlessness stupefying. It's like going to one of those beaches in northern Europe where naked Germans lounge around all August grilling knockwurst and playing Frisbee. In theory it should be erotic, but after a few hours in the presence of all that lumbering nakedness, the mere thought of sex makes you want to throw up.

So while the people around me are swept up in high hilarity, I am bored. I am bored by Ms. Ensler's taxonomy of female moans (a kind of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* version of that scene in *When Harry Met Sally*). I am bored by the lists of what vaginas would say if they could talk ("Feed me . . . Brave choice . . . Enter at your own risk"). I am even bored by one of the inspirational high points of the show, a statutory rape monologue about a 13-year-old girl who is seduced by a 25-year-old woman and initiated into the full joys of womanhood. "I say, if it was a rape, it was a good rape, then, a rape that turned my [guess what?] into a kind of heaven," Ms. Ensler's 13-year-old says.

Personally, I just don't get it. But maybe that's just because women are from Venus, men are from Hell.

The hands on my watch drag and drag. There are serious passages in the play—most notably a moving monologue by a Bosnian rape victim. But generally Ms. Ensler,

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Miles Ladin for the New York Times

New York theatergoers compare notes after Eve Ensler's hit show.

like a high-consciousness Joan Rivers, goes for laughs, and the women around me only begin showing exhaustion during maybe the last half-hour. This audience, and thousands of similar audiences around the world, regard Eve Ensler, as the *New York Times* put it, as the "Messiah." *The Vagina Monologues* has been staged from Jerusalem to Johannesburg to Oklahoma City. Galaxies of movie stars have performed it: Whoopi Goldberg, Glenn Close, Susan Sarandon, Winona Ryder, Swoosie Kurtz. This Valentine's Day it's going to be performed on college campuses across the country—a sort of anti-Valentine on the joys of anti-romantic feminist lust. Hillary Clinton has embraced Eve Ensler, inviting her to the White House for chats and appearing with her at political events. "We're getting to be friends," Ms. Ensler told the *Times*, and in the New York version of the play, she does a little campaigning for the first lady, exulting, "We've got a c— running for Senate!" The crowd goes wild.

Needless to say, if this play were broadcast on network television, Alan Keyes would be president tomorrow. But outrage isn't the right reaction either, because of a fact central to the success of *The Vagina Monologues*: It's pretend. Most of the taboos Ms. Ensler is supposed to be challenging actually were broken down a quarter century ago, with books like *Our Bodies, Ourselves*, *The Sensuous Woman*, and all the other self-fondling tomes of 1970s consciousness raising. Ideologically, the show is no more daring than a Helen Reddy reunion tour.

Moreover, the message of this play is that womanhood is defined by sex. "You are your vagina," Ms. Ensler repeats. "My clitoris is me," one of her characters declares. She talks about the "Civilization of vaginas." But this isn't real. No real person is exclusively defined by sex, as Ms. Ensler's characters are. No real world is as totally sex-centric as Ms. Ensler's world. Very few real women actually go to female prostitutes. Very few find the zipless sex described here wonderful, as Ms. Ensler sketches it as being. This is escapist art, not realist art. It's about a make-believe world in which women are all united by their sex organs, in which women enjoy sex without emotional complexities, in which desire is wanton and simple, and in which spiritual bliss is achieved through the enjoyment of endless orgasms. In other words, this is the Starbucks crowd's version of a night out with the Chippendales, those perfect male strippers who go around sparking make-believe riots in female-only nightclubs. *The Vagina Monologues* is an occasion for sophisticated women to get together, laugh at some naughty things, and have a

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rollicking good time by taking part in a collective and exuberantly tasteless parody of lust.

But looking around the audience, I can see that at least in one regard, Ms. Ensler's play does touch reality. This audience is middle aged to elderly. Most of the women are in their forties, fifties, or sixties, and a few are in their seventies. Many of these women were probably cutting-edge feminists when the movement was at its peak. Now imagine you are one of them. You struggled through the ordeals of those early days—marches, self-doubts, divorces. Being a feminist is at the core of your identity, and so you try to keep up with the cutting edge. And along comes a fresh generation of women like Eve Ensler gloriously proud of their bodies. Women in their twenties and thirties are the beneficiaries of your struggles, and while the first feminist cohort was chided for being humorless, these younger women are funny and sassy and erotic. In fact, sometimes they seem to talk of little besides sex. Comedian Sandra Bernhard performs one sexual riff after another. Courtney Love formed a rock group called Hole. Cindi Lauper sings of female masturbation. Madonna struts across the nation's consciousness showing off her privates and her perfectly muscled back. Candace Bushnell chronicles her life in *Sex In the City*. Salt-N-Pepa are as proudly randy as the boy rappers.

You can almost hear the clackety-clack of their Prada heels beating down the avenues, the snap of their plastic surgeons' latex gloves.

That's show biz, but even in academia being a feminist often means writing about desire, Queer Theory, or the high-toned erotica that now takes up so much shelf space at Barnes & Noble. Naomi Wolf wrote a book, *Promiscuities*, celebrating female desire. "I read, in a sense, to redeem the slut in me, the part that feels (as it does, perhaps, in many other women) vulnerable no matter how many external signs of respectability I acquire," Wolf writes. Camille Paglia shoots off in all directions, a fireworks display of sexual heterodoxy. Online sisterhood magazines like *gURL.com* let it all hang out. Distinguished historian Amanda Foreman (author of *Georgiana: Duchess of Devonshire*) poses on her author tour in a see-through halter top, reclining seductively on a leather couch. These women want everyone to know you can be a careerist and a sex-tiger at the same time. Lust seems to have replaced rage as the hip feminist passion.

Meanwhile women of the younger generation flaunt their strength. They are out kickboxing, running, weight-lifting. You might even say a feminist cult of the body has developed. One of the great success stories of the last decade is the WNBA, attracting thousands of young girls to sports and athleticism. The most important symbol of womanhood in the past few years was the shot of Brandi Chastain of the triumphant U.S. women's soccer team ripping off her shirt and displaying her rippling abs and her sports bra.

On the one hand, it's great, this cult of the body. Women are proud of their physical selves. Women are strong and muscular. But on the other hand, there's a drawback. You are 60. What are you going to do? Where do you fit in? Are you going to watch this latest chapter in the feminist saga from the geriatric sidelines?

Of course not. You are going to take control. Age is no constraint these days. We have gyms. We have surgeons. We have a panoply of empowerment tools just waiting for the financially well-endowed striver.

So if you look around the audience of *The Vagina Monologues*, it's an impressive sight. The women may be getting up there in age, but many of them are remarkably fit. There's a weird rule that applies in this crowd. The older you get, the blonder you're likely to be. Many of the women in their sixties have colored their hair an elegant Lexus-blonde shade, and if you look over the audience, there are patches of silverish yellow, concentrations of lustrous manes that are three shades lighter than the accompanying eyebrows.

I confess I was first drawn to this play by a photograph that appeared in the *New York Times* last December, reprinted nearby. It's one of those newspaper shots that seem to capture a whole social class—its aspirations and traumas. It was taken just after one of Ms. Ensler's performances, and the main vibe you get from it is "effort." As you look at the intently talking women in it, you become aware of all the work and self-discipline that has gone into their appearance. You can almost hear the urgings of their personal trainers, the grunts on their stair machines, the clatter of plates bearing the itsy-bitsy salads that pass for lunch, the clackety-clack of their Prada heels beating down the avenues, the snap of their plastic surgeons' latex gloves. Normally women of a certain age have a little looseness to their upper arms. But look at that woman in the sleeveless pullover. Those taut arms don't happen by themselves. It takes work. "Women's work today has become in large part how we look," Nancy Friday writes in *Our Looks, Our Lives*.

Of course, the women in the photograph represent only a slice of womankind, and only a portion of the post-

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feminist professional class. They are to be found mostly in Manhattan, Santa Monica, and wherever else concierges are thick on the ground. But they definitely make up a prominent and powerful tranche of society. They are marked by an awesome and innovative work ethic. You can sense the drive, the ambition, the little engine that knows no rest—as they used to say about Abraham Lincoln's drive to succeed.

Foreigners see this as the mark of the Americans, this application of the achievement ethos to every aspect of life. Luigi Barzini captured the ethos pretty well, quoting some of his own earlier writing in his memoir *O America*:

> Opportunity in America went hand in hand with a crippling personal burden—"the individual moral duty not to waste one hour [of life, to] achieve success and make money, build and produce more and more, and at the same time, persistently improve the world, untiringly trying to teach all men how to live, work, produce, consume and rule themselves the American way!"

In other words, if you are an American, you are likely to be a striver. If you are an American social conservative, you're a social conservative and a striver. If you're an American hippie, you're a hippie and a striver. And over time, it is the ideology of achievement and self-improvement that ends up coloring whatever else you believe. The hippies may have started by dropping out of the rat race to live off the land, but it wasn't long before they were producing high quality ice creams and fruit juices from the land, and building large corporations to market the stuff worldwide.

And this same achievement ethos has colored feminism. The urge to strive and succeed at work was there from the beginning. But as you look around the audience of *The Vagina Monologues*, you see on full display the urge to strive and succeed in a Cult-of-the-Body era, when upscale virtue has been redefined along Spartan lines to include taut skin and toned muscles.

One wants to project an image of power and strength. Young women may be naturally beautiful, but the women in this audience have *achieved* beauty. The old-fashioned desire to look pretty for the menfolk has been transmuted into a newer desire to look fit and taut as a symbol of strength, power, and mastery.

The health clubs do phenomenal business. And the plastic surgeons have never been busier. The number of facelifts has nearly doubled in the past seven years, to over 100,000 a year (remember when enlightened people used to condemn Barbie for being artificial?). There are now many different procedures on offer at the face factory. You can get a mini-eyelift or a chin tuck or the full rip and staple. The early facelifts produced that skeletal skin-over-the-skull look, so now there are a range of fat graftings and "facial fillers" that can be injected to puff up cheeks and other spots. Bovine collagen (from cows) is popular, as is Dermalogen, skin from cadavers. The benefit of taking your injected fat from a dead human is that there's less risk of an allergic reaction. The latest innovation is autologous materials such as Isologen and Autologen, which are harvested from the person's own body, usually from a tummy tuck.

It takes about six hours to inject enough stuff to plump up an entire face; it has to be done carefully or the fat will migrate. Some people prefer to use a human growth hormone to reverse facial aging. It's expensive, about $1,000 a month, and it's painful (it's self-injected six times a week through the thigh), but as Erica Jong noted before her facelift, when her friends had theirs done, they felt that their attitudes were lifted as well. It's a small price to pay to take control of your life and spirit. "Women in the '50s vacuumed," Maureen Dowd wrote recently. "Women in the '00s are vacuumed. Our Hoovers have turned on us!"

During the first burst of mass feminism, writers defended aging women against traditional notions of beauty. "Aging in women is a process of becoming obscene sexually," Susan Sontag wrote in 1972, "for the flabby bosom, wrinkled neck, spotted hands, thinning white hair, waistless torso and veined legs of an old woman are felt to be obscene." There was a lot of writing in those days analyzing the role witches played in traditional fairy tales, how the post-childbearing woman was seen as a terrifying and evil menace.

But now flabby skin is the sign of a worse sort of corruption. You are not healthy. You are not working out. You are not empowering yourself. Beauty has been converted from a romantic lure to a power symbol. And the achievement ethos means that one has to perpetually flex one's will power for the sake of self-improvement. Upending the patriarchy and upending oppression have been supplemented by the determination to upend the ravages of time. Take control. Achieve. Succeed.

This really is an ambitious country. Every seed that's planted turns to ambition in the end. Eve Ensler sits up there on stage making her vagina public. And by making that most private thing public, she turns it into a political object and a career move. She brings it into the realm of ambition.

"The personal is political," the feminists used to chant. But nowadays the movement has changed. The personal is professional. Everything can be worked on and improved. Everything can be a sign of achievement and mastery. Everything—even the most intimate parts of the body—can be measured according to the criteria laid down by what poets in the pre-feminist era used to call that bitch goddess, Success. ♦

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Terrorism and Liberalism in the '70s

A decade of spinelessness helped pave the way for the election of Ronald Reagan.

By David Frum

Glass, glass everywhere: That's what travelers saw when they entered Washington's new Dulles International Airport in 1959. Under a concrete roof that curved like the takeoff trajectory of a jet hung four vast windows without a retaining wall in sight. And beyond the glass, there was only the sky—the sky that America ruled in the way that Britain had once ruled the waves. It was from the air that America had dropped the atomic bombs that ended World War II. It was by air that America had sustained its hold on West Berlin during the darkest moment of the Cold War. It was through the air that the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe subverted the enemy Soviet Union. And it was via air that millions of newly prosperous Americans, their wallets stuffed with their almighty dollars, were inflicting the new industry of mass tourism upon the unhappy residents of Paris and Rome.

You can still see the glass at Dulles. But you can't see much of the sky. The vista overlooking the runways is now chopped off by a long wall, broken at intervals by doorways that lead to metal detectors and x-ray machines. It's incredible now, but within the memory of people now living, air passengers routinely walked from the door of the airport to their seat on the plane without being searched, scanned, or interrogated. And this was not seen as remarkable or miraculous: It was ordinary, normal, the way things were expected to be. Despite (or maybe because of) the international tension of the 1950s and '60s—despite the Berlin and Cuban Crises—the Eisenhower and Kennedy years were a time of security for Americans from dangers much below the level of thermonuclear holocaust. Americans had reason to fear war, but they did not have to fear that some bomb-carrying fanatic might blow their airplane to smithereens.

The first task of government is to guarantee the safety of the citizen, and that is a task that after 1970 Western governments performed less and less well. Over the Labor Day weekend of 1970, teams of Arab commandos seeking the release of Sirhan Sirhan, the Palestinian assassin of Robert Kennedy, performed the spectacular feat of simultaneously hijacking four jumbo jets, two of them the property of American airlines. Two of the hijacked jumbos were flown to Dawson's Field, near Amman, Jordan. Four hundred passengers, 150 or so of them Americans, were held hostage for three weeks until Jordan's King Hussein mobilized his army to force the release of the captives. The empty planes were blown up by the hijackers in a headline-grabbing act of destruction.

The first airline hijacking recorded by history occurred in Peru in 1930, when officers attempting a coup diverted a plane to drop leaflets over Lima. The United States suffered them intermittently in the 1950s, mostly by bank robbers commandeering planes to make good their exits. But so long as planes had relatively short flying ranges—and so long as there was nowhere within that range for a would-be hijacker to commandeer a plane *to*—hijacking's potential was severely limited. Then, on February 21, 1968, Lawrence Wilson Rhodes stepped aboard a Delta Airlines DC-8, pointed a pistol at a stewardess after takeoff, and demanded to be flown to Havana. Over the next two years, his example would inspire an assortment of crooks on the lam, lunatics, black nationalists, and Castroite radicals to commandeer a total of 38 American planes, 37 of them to Cuba. None of these hijackings resulted in death or injury. The Cuban authorities behaved politely enough, feeding the abducted passengers roast beef dinners and selling them the famous local rum

David Frum, a contributing editor to The Weekly Standard, *is the author of* How We Got Here: The 70's: The Decade That Brought You Modern Life—for Better or Worse, *from which this article is adapted.* *Copyright © 2000 by David Frum. Reprinted by permission of Basic Books. All rights reserved.*

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AP/Wide World Photos

An Air France jetliner, hijacked by German and Arab terrorists, is diverted from Tel Aviv to Entebbe airport in Uganda, 1976.

and cigars at duty-free prices before sending them home.

These early hijackings were not without their ludicrous aspects—"Take dees plane to Cooba!" became the punch line of wearisome nightclub comedians—but their import was not funny at all. The United States was no longer able to protect its citizens from international anarchy. And through the 1970s, international anarchy obtruded itself ever more terrifyingly into American consciousness.

Between 1968 and 1981, terrorists murdered the American ambassadors to Guatemala, Sudan, Cyprus, and Lebanon, the prime minister of Jordan, the prime minister of Spain, the chairman of Germany's second largest bank, the front-runner for the presidency of Italy, the uncle of the Queen of England, the President of Egypt, and, very nearly, the commander of NATO and the pope. Thousands of perfectly ordinary people were killed or maimed by international and domestic terrorism in Argentina, France, Germany, and Uruguay. The Irish Republican Army, an organization largely financed by money raised in the United States, murdered 2,261 English and Irish people between 1969 and 1982, was responsible for 7,500 bombings that claimed the lives of more than 600 people, and deliberately crippled more than one thousand journalists, businessmen, and ordinary fellow-Catholics who failed in the opinion of the IRA to show sufficient enthusiasm for the cause.

No grievance seemed too obscure to provoke terrorism. In May 1977, gunmen demanding independence from Indonesian rule for South Molucca, a territory once known only to the clever 11-year-olds in the National Geographic Society's annual geography bee, seized 105 schoolchildren and their six teachers at a school in the small Dutch town of Bovensmilde. Another South Moluccan band took hostage 50 adults aboard a commuter train. After nearly a three-week standoff, Dutch marines assaulted the train and the school. All the children were saved; two adult hostages and all the terrorists were killed.

No portion of the earth's surface was too idyllic to attack. Black nationalists murdered the governor-general of Bermuda and his military aide as the two men walked the governor's dog after dinner in March 1973. A British diplomat and a French-Canadian cabinet minister were kidnapped in October 1970 by terrorists demanding the independence of Quebec.

No season of goodwill was too sacred to be profaned. A team of Palestinian terrorists attacked the Munich Olympics in September 1972 in an attempt to kidnap the Israeli Olympic team. The incident ended in the violent death of all 11 athletes.

No taboo was so awesome as to go unviolated. One leader of the German Red Army Faction, also known as the Baader-Meinhof gang, drew up plans to bomb the headquarters of what remained of Jewish communal and religious life in West Berlin "in order to get rid of this thing about Jews that we've all had to have since the Nazi time." He was caught before the plans could be carried out.

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Terrorism *worked*, in the sense that it intimidated. In the summer of 1976, two German terrorists and five Arab hijackers seized an Air France jetliner en route to Tel Aviv and flew it to Uganda's Entebbe Airport. Ugandan dictator Idi Amin had food and supplies waiting and deployed troops around the perimeter of the airport as soon as the passengers were marched into it. On the ground, the two Germans took command. They released the non-Jews and held the Jews. "Among the hostages at Entebbe," wrote a leading authority on the Baader-Meinhof gang, "there were a few who had been in Hitler's concentration camps. Once again they found themselves being sorted out, Jews from non-Jews, the Jews selected to die. Once again they were ordered about by guards with guns, shouted at to move quickly—*Schnell!*—this time by a German woman hijacker, who also felt it was necessary to slap them. One of the captives went up to Bose [Wilfried Bose, the leader] and showed him a number indelibly branded on his arm. He told him that he had got it in a Nazi concentration camp. He said he had supposed that a new and different generation had grown up in Germany, but with this experience of Bose and his girl comrade, he found it difficult to believe that the Nazi movement had died. Bose replied that this was something quite different from Nazism." Israeli commandos flew 2,000 miles and attacked the airfield in the middle of the night, scattered the Ugandans, killed the terrorists, and saved all but one of the hostages. The world's political leaders did not dare applaud. United Nations Secretary-General Kurt Waldheim condemned the Israeli raid on Entebbe as a violation of Ugandan sovereignty. The government of France, the owner of the hijacked plane, offered not a single word of praise or thanks to Israel. The Ford administration managed to summon up only a milky expression of "satisfaction" that the lives of the passengers had been saved.

AP/Wide World Photos

Patty Hearst, victim of Stockholm Syndrome.

Supineness in the face of terrorist violence was such a distinctive trait of the 1970s that the phenomenon acquired a useful shorthand name: the Stockholm Syndrome, after an incident that occurred in the summer of 1973. Two ex-cons attempted to rob a bank in the Swedish capital. Police burst in on the robbery and, to protect themselves, the crooks grabbed four hostages and fled into the bank vault. The police besieged the robbers for five days, and finally flushed them out by drilling holes in the vault ceiling and dropping tear gas inside. Then a curious thing happened. One of the hostages emerged to announce that she had fallen in love with and intended to marry the lead crook. The syndrome entered ordinary speech a year later when Patty Hearst, the media heiress, threw in her lot with the political radicals who had kidnapped her. She denounced her family and fiancé on tape recordings. "I have changed—grown. I've become conscious and can never go back to the life we led before. . . . My love . . . has grown into an unselfish love of my comrades here, in prison and on the streets." Hearst even toted a gun alongside her captors in an April 1974 San Francisco bank robbery.

The Stockholm Syndrome seemed to grip the whole world. All too often, it was the targets of terrorism who endured the blame for the gunmen's crimes. The influential French newspaper *Le Monde* expressed this line of reasoning forcefully in a 1977 commentary on the outrages of the Baader-Meinhof gang: "Only a society that is itself monstrous can produce monsters."

The Carter administration fell victim to the Stockholm Syndrome, too. In a speech given soon after the Iranians took 52 American diplomats in Tehran hostage, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance urged Americans not to get too upset over the incident. "Most Americans now recognize that we alone cannot dictate events. This recognition is not a sign of America's decline. It is a sign of growing American maturity in a complex world." When Vance's boss, President Jimmy Carter, warned a few weeks later that there was a limit to American maturity, the Ayatollah Khomeini mocked him: "He [Carter] sometimes threatens us militarily and at other times economically, but he is aware himself that he is beating on an empty drum. Neither does Carter have the guts for military action, nor would anyone listen to him." (When Carter finally attempted military action, which crashed and burned in the Iranian desert in April 1980, Vance resigned in protest.)

But America was not an empty drum. After a decade of insults, large and small, the Iran hostage-taking snapped the country out of its defeatist funk. Disc jockeys began playing a comic new song to the tune of the Beach Boys' "Barbara Ann": "Bomb, bomb, bomb; bomb, bomb Iran."

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AP/Wide World Photos, top and bottom

Leaders of the Baader-Meinhof gang: Ulrike Meinhof (top), the wounded Andreas Baader after his arrest in 1972 (bottom).

"What's flat and glows in the dark?" went a popular joke. The punch line: "Iran, 24 hours after Ronald Reagan's inauguration." The Iranians must have heard the joke too. Before the 24 hours had elapsed, all the hostages were released.

The humiliations of the Carter years stiffened America's spine. A constellation of influential ex-Democrats—Paul Nitze, Irving Kristol, Eugene Rostow, and Norman Podhoretz—formed a "Committee on the Present Danger," to rally the country for rearmament. In 1975, only 18 percent of Americans said the country was spending "too little" on defense. In 1978, still only 28 percent said the country was spending "too little." But by 1980, an overwhelming 60 percent majority worried the country was spending too little.

Carter never quite managed to understand what the country was bothered about. He scorned Ronald Reagan's demand for firmness and resolve, telling reporters that Reagan's criticisms of his policies reflected Reagan's "apparent inability" to understand the complexities of arms control. "If you've got just a strong military and you are jingoistic in spirit, and just show the macho of the United States," Carter explained to 50 Chicago suburbanites a month before the 1980 election, "that is an excellent way to lead our country toward war. . . . The Oval Office is not a place for simplistic answers. It is not a place for shooting from the hip. It is not a place for snap judgments that might have serious consequences." But if the choices were simplistic answers or Carter's answers, simplicity could look mighty appealing. In September 1980, Leon Jaworski, a former Watergate special prosecutor, signed up as the honorary chairman of "Democrats for Reagan." When reminded by a reporter of his earlier harsh assessment of the Republican nominee—not five months before Jaworski had described him as "an extremist whose over-the-counter simplistic remedies and shopworn platitudes trouble the open-minded and informed voter"—Jaworski replied, "I would rather have a competent extremist than an incompetent moderate."

It was the collapse of social order at home and the ebbing of American prestige abroad that shattered Democratic liberalism. As anti-Vietnam protesters battled police outside the 1968 Democratic convention, a pollster asked the American public whether Mayor Daley had done right to unleash his cops to club and arrest unarmed students carrying "We are your children" placards. Sixty-six percent said yes, Mayor Daley was right; only 20 percent said no. The Daley poll asked Americans to take sides between the forces of order and the forces of disorder. By inventing excuses for riots, condoning crime, and cringing before terrorism, Democratic liberals finally convinced the public that only conservatives and Republicans could be trusted to maintain order. "Since 1960," observed a Yale anthropologist who lived for two years of the middle 1970s in Canarsie, a working-class neighborhood adjacent to Kennedy Airport in New York, "the Jews and Italians of Canarsie have embellished and modified the meaning of liberalism, associating it with profligacy, spinelessness, malevolence, masochism, elitism, fantasy, anarchy, idealism, softness, irresponsibility, and sanctimoniousness. The term *conservative* acquired connotations of pragmatism, character, reciprocity, truthfulness, stoicism, manliness, realism, hardness, vengeance, strictness, and responsibility." In 1980, the Roosevelt Democrats of Canarsie voted overwhelmingly in favor of Ronald Reagan, the Jewish precincts nearly as heavily as the Italian ones.

Americans in 1980 were not returning to the era of laissez faire. Rugged individualism no longer swayed them. But neither did the soft social-democratic ethos of the middle years of this century that had ushered in a bloody decade of terrorism. Americans were moving on to something new: a creed that blended the antique ideal of self-reliance with a new sense of entitlement. It was a fuzzy political idea—perfect for the fuzzy era to come—and the struggle to imbue it with meaning would define the politics of the post-Cold War era. ♦

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You deserve a factual look at...

The Golan Heights

To Whom Do They Belong? Can Israel Survive Without Them?

Syria's president, Hafez Assad, has apparently "consented to discuss peace" with Israel's Prime Minister Ehud Barak, provided that Mr. Barak agrees to start negotiations where (allegedly) the late Prime Minister Rabin left off four years ago. Astonishingly and regrettably, Mr Barak seems to have agreed to this presumptuous imposition.

What are the facts?

Historical Background—The Golan was always part of the Jewish homeland. The Syrian claim to the Golan is tenuous. Syria, as a political entity, did not exist at all until after the first World War. Until then it was just another province in the Ottoman empire, with ill-defined borders. In 1923, in an Anglo/French great-power play, the border between Syria and what was then called Palestine was established. The Golan Heights were ceded to Syria.

Even before the establishment of Israel in 1948, the Syrians, having heavily fortified the area, subjected the villages in northern Israel to almost daily shellings, making normal life impossible. In the 1967 Six-Day War, Syria attacked Israel and was defeated. Israel occupied the Golan Heights and in 1981, for all practical purposes annexed them.

Syria and its President—Syria is the most destabilizing influence in the Middle East. It is classified by the U.S. State Department as a narcotics-dealing and terrorist state. Its main fury is directed against Israel, which is perceived as a bulwark of Western influence and civilization, both of which Syria totally rejects.

Syria's President, Hafez Assad, is a tyrant, every bit as ruthless and cunning as his Iraqi counterpart, Saddam Hussein. Under Assad, Syria is a world center for terrorism. It still harbors Nazi bigwigs, who found welcome there after the World War. Few doubt that he was the mastermind and final authority in the suicide attack on the Marine barracks in Beirut in which 241 Americans died, and in the explosion of Pan Am flight #103 in which 270 people lost their lives. He oversees one of the largest narcotics operations in the world.

> "With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction."

Military Security—The Golan is the size of the New York borough of Queens, about 10 miles wide, with a plateau on either side of a ridge. If it were part of Syria it would be less than 1% of its territory. But it is of a supreme strategic importance to Israel. Its high ground provides early-warning capability, without which Israel–just as in 1948, in 1967, and in 1973–would be subject to surprise attack by the Syrians. Its loss would obligate Israel to stay on constant alert and to maintain a state of readiness and mobilization that would be economically and socially untenable. The Golan, which ranges up to a height of 2300 ft., dominates the Jordan Valley, the lowest point on earth about 700 ft. below sea level. On the Golan itself, there are only two natural terrain bottlenecks through which tanks can advance. Those choke points are defensible and made possible the repulse of 1400 Syrian tanks that attacked Israel in the 1973 war. But with the Golan in Syrian hands, and without the radar installations that would give Israel warning of any military movements, thousands of tanks–backed up by missiles and airplanes–could overrun Israel in a matter of hours. It would be a strategically impossible situation, especially for a country as small as Israel–smaller than Lake Michigan, smaller by half than San Bernardino County in California. The Golan does not make for perfect defense, but it gives Israel a small breathing space for mobilization.

The Golan is the source of over one-third of Israel's fresh water. In 1964, with the Golan in Syrian hands, Syria attempted to divert these headwaters and to cripple Israel's water supply. It is more than likely that, given another opportunity, Syria would once again attempt to destroy Israel's water supply.

In its keen desire to bring peace to its people, after more than fifty years of war and bloodshed, Israel has been prepared to make far-reaching concessions to Syria on the Golan, in exchange for real peace. But it is hoped that even Ehud Barak, Israel's recently-elected prime minister, will not be prepared to give up all of the Golan high ground and to return to the "death trap" borders of 1967, or anything close to them. In order to survive within such borders, Israel would have to rely on the goodwill of the Arab states, most of which—with the recent exception of Jordan and of the cold peace with Egypt—are still in a declared or undeclared state of war with Israel. An aggressor will attack only if confident of victory. With the Golan in Israeli hands, attacking Arabs could be confident of defeat and peace would be preserved. To hand the Golan to Syria is a prescription for war and for Israel's destruction.

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Modern Times

Science, Religion, and Francis Bacon

By Algis Valiunas

If the good of the body—hygiene, comfort, longevity, protection from illness, relief from pain, and availability of pleasure—is the standard by which we judge, then the past doesn't stand a chance against modern times. Whatever nobility, magnificence, or wisdom previous ages might have had, the present is the age of ages—and Francis Bacon is universally acknowledged as its founder, the father of the modern scientific project whose goal is nothing less than the eradication of human misery.

Yet the question remains whether we actually live the sort of life Bacon desired for his descendants under the new dispensation of modern knowledge. Seeing the machine guns and mustard gas of World War I, Albert Einstein suggested that our technological know-how is like an ax in the hands of a psychopath. But even the benefits science has brought us are troubling. The better off the body is, the more painful seem the ills it continues to suffer, the more urgent the pleasures it does not enjoy, and the less we concern ourselves with the needs of the soul.

That Bacon is responsible in no small part for our modern condition seems undeniable. And yet, it's equally undeniable that he wanted a place for the soul in the new order and was not quite able to shed the beliefs of the old world from which his modern children would make their break. Bacon was a man of parts, and the parts did not always add up to a coherent whole. The author of the *Essays* sounds quite unlike the author of *The New Organon*, as though each book were written by a part of Bacon that the other parts were unaware of. Even from essay to essay and one passage of *The New Organon* to another, there are chasms not easily bridged. And how are we to fit in the fact that Bacon was also a political man, active in the highest reaches of English public life?

Two recent books about Bacon point out the fissures in his nature. The biography *Hostage to Fortune*, by Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart, history professors at the University of London, is devoted almost exclusively to his worldly career, and leaves the reader feeling that Bacon spent most of his time living someone else's life. The critical study *Francis Bacon*, by Perez Zagorin, is a largely sound and sensible introduction to Bacon's thought, but it papers over the gap that sometimes opens between his scientific boldness and his Christian piety. The story is more complicated than Zagorin allows.

A Renaissance man, Bacon was a lawyer, parliamentarian, and courtier. Doggedly ambitious, he rose as high in the legal profession as a man could go: the lord chancellorship of England. Talent and tenacity were in the blood. His father Nicholas made his way from modest beginnings to be Queen Elizabeth's lord keeper of the Great Seal. Francis was born in 1561, and the queen made much of the clever young boy, calling him her "little lord keeper." At twelve, Bacon went off to study at Trinity College, Cambridge, where, the story goes, he developed his antipathy toward Aristotle. Having taken in what Cambridge had to offer, he proceeded to study law at Gray's Inn until his father secured him a place in the entourage of the ambassador to France. But his three years in Paris came to an end with his father's death, and—as Nicholas Bacon did not provide for Francis in his will—he was obliged to earn his living. He resumed his legal training, and at twenty was elected to the House of Commons, where he would serve for most of his life.

Algis Valiunas is a writer in Florida.

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Bacon knew he was cut out for great things, but he had a hard time convincing others. When the queen sought parliamentary approval for onerous new taxes in 1593, Bacon spoke out in opposition, suggesting that the levy be parceled out in six years rather than three. The queen was furious, and she stayed that way. His protests that he had followed his conscience failed to mollify her. She kept him around court, but the choice positions he sought would not come his way during her lifetime.

Bacon never gave up trying, and he never again made the mistake of preferring the promptings of his conscience to the wishes of royal power. During the early 1590s, Bacon became a devoted adherent of the Earl of Essex, who was establishing himself, through personal charm and martial prowess, as the queen's favorite. Not even Essex's patronage could alter the queen's acquired distaste for Bacon, but the rising star did what he could for his protégé, and they might even be said to have become something like friends.

Friendship has its pitfalls, especially for men ambitious of high place. In 1599 Essex led an expedition to try to quell the rebellion in Ireland led by the Earl of Tyrone; Essex failed to get the job done, and, when against the queen's express command he came back to London to explain himself, she turned into his implacable enemy. Stripped of his offices and forbidden the court, he thought only of vengeance, and contrived a plot to seize the queen and overthrow her followers. The plot fizzled, and Essex was tried for treason.

Among the counsel charged with Essex's prosecution was Bacon, who shone in his role as the queen's dutiful servant. Essex went to the scaffold; Bacon pocketed £1,200, a handsome piece of change, from the fines levied on the conspirators whose lives were spared. Zagorin condemns Bacon's role in Essex's prosecution as "a sign of moral coarseness and a deficient sense of personal honor." Jardine and Stewart conclude that his loyalty to the queen was not misplaced. In any case, Bacon showed himself a hard man in a hard world.

With Elizabeth's death in 1603, opportunities opened up for Bacon. His cousin Lord Salisbury was James I's leading minister, and Bacon made all he could of the connection, suing with tireless humility for advancement. He was knighted in 1603, and was appointed solicitor general in 1607. In 1606 he married, unabashedly for money (his bride was thirteen years old, while he

Hostage to Fortune
The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon
by Lisa Jardine and Alan Stewart
Hill and Wang, 637 pp., $35

Francis Bacon
by Perez Zagorin
Princeton University Press, 286 pp., $35

was forty-five and very likely homosexual). Notebooks from this period show him scheming and maneuvering to rise even higher. Salisbury grew wary of his cousin's ambition, and kept him in his place. But when Salisbury died in 1612, Bacon assailed the king with importunities, and in 1613 James made him attorney general. Once again Bacon deftly attached himself to the royal favorite, Sir George Villiers, who would become Duke of Buckingham, and who would control the court's patronage. Fawning, groveling, and toadying, Bacon continued to work his way up: privy councilor in 1616, lord keeper of the Great Seal in 1617, lord chancellor in 1618—and ennobled with a title, Lord Verulam, Viscount Saint Alban. He was good at what he did, and his prosecution of Sir Walter Raleigh for treason in 1618 earned him particular distinction.

As Jardine and Stewart point out, Bacon seemed blithely unaware that "what he did to others could, in time, be done to him." He was greedy, he was extravagant, he was not circumspect, and in time he fell. In 1621 he was charged with taking bribes; what especially fired his accusers was that he had accepted money and then ruled against his benefactors. Convicted, he was fined the enormous sum of £40,000, prohibited from public office, and forbidden to come within twelve miles of the court.

Bacon ought to have been broken. "And yet," Jardine and Stewart write, he "turned the sentence into the cornerstone for the intellectual work he had wanted to do for the past thirty years." In the five years he had left, a torrent of thought poured forth. He extensively revised his *Essays*, translated into Latin and expanded *The Advancement of Learning*, wrote *The History of the Reign of King Henry VII* in both English and Latin versions, composed a substantial fragment of the utopian fantasy *New Atlantis*, turned out four Latin works of natural history, translated a selection of psalms into English verse, and produced a good number of lesser-known writings. He never ceased in his efforts to regain the royal favor, but philosophy was his salvation. Once, hearing that the king had just denied his petition, he returned to the work he had interrupted, telling his secretary, "Well, Sir, yon business won't go on; let us go on with this, for this is in our power." An assistant declared in admiration "that though his fortune may have changed, yet I never saw any change in his mien, his words, or his deeds toward any man: but he was always the same, both in sorrow and in joy, as a philosopher ought to be."

According to John Aubrey's classic account of Bacon's death—Aubrey had it from Thomas Hobbes, who had been Bacon's secretary—the passion for knowledge killed Bacon. On a cold

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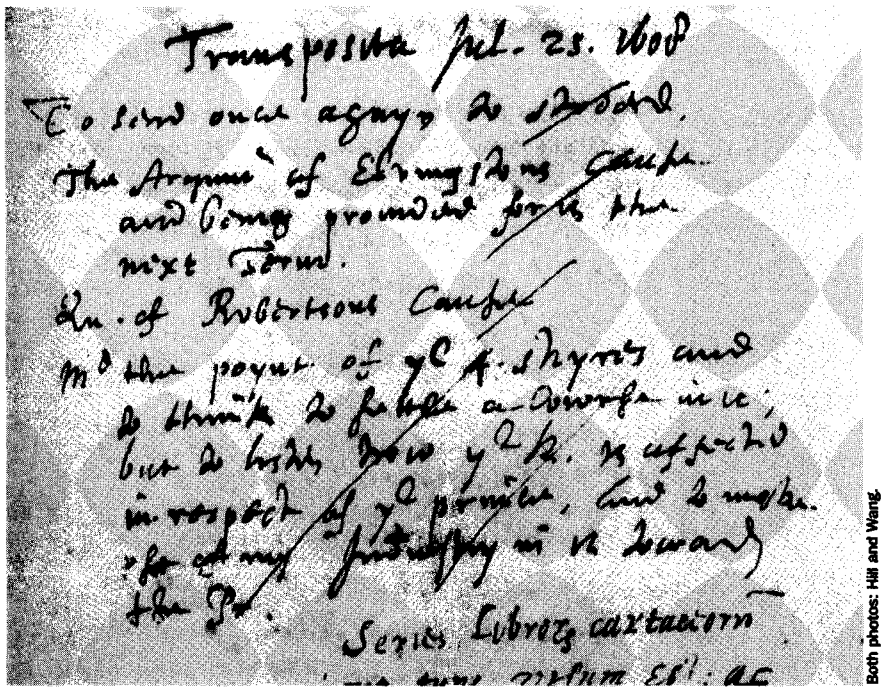
Easter Sunday in 1626, as he was going for a carriage ride, the thought occurred to him that flesh might be preserved by refrigeration as well as by salt. Impatient to test his idea, he procured a chicken, and stuffed the carcass with snow from the ground. The cold immediately made him ill, and a few days later he died. Jardine and Stewart refuse to swallow this tale, and they propose instead that Bacon had been experimenting on himself to see whether the use of opiates prolonged human life, and that he had accidentally taken an overdose. Their version, like Aubrey's, has a fetching moral shapeliness, and it is just plausible enough to unsettle, if not to dislodge, Aubrey's as the tale of choice.

Zagorin rightly declares that Bacon's political career "had a significant effect," giving to his thought "its extreme worldliness, its markedly prudential character, and its preoccupation with success and the creation of one's own fortune." Certainly, in the *Essays*, Bacon concerns himself with the matters of the world: "Of Great Place," "Of Cunning," "Of Seeming Wise," "Of Riches," "Of Ambition," "Of Honour and Reputation." William Blake found Bacon's *Essays* so worldly as to be "good advice for Satan's kingdom." The dedication in the 1625 edition states that the *Essays* has been his most popular book because its topics "come home to men's business and bosoms," and the subtitle, *Counsels, Civill and Morall*, suggests that Bacon saw himself as an authoritative adviser on everyday human affairs.

Full of shrewd and—for the most part—morally unexceptionable observations, the book seems the work of someone who thinks the way sensible people are supposed to and who possesses a mind noticeably finer than one's own but not dauntingly alien or out of reach. "Nature is often hidden, sometimes overcome, seldom extinguished," he avers. "A man that is young in years may be old in hours, if he have lost no time," he adds. "Reading maketh a full man, conference a ready man, and writing an exact man." "The greatest trust between man and man is the trust of giving counsel." "But chiefly the mould of a man's fortune is in his own hands." "A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." The most obvious excellence of the *Essays* is this sort of gemlike utterance, cut and polished to a high gloss, though the diction is usually simple and the syntax straightforward.



Page from Francis Bacon's notebook, July 1608.

Both photos: Hill and Wang.

When Bacon is placed alongside that other great Renaissance essayist, Michel de Montaigne, one perceives above all how different they are. Bacon is given to displaying the finely wrought products of considerable offstage thought; Montaigne presents his thought on the move, reveals himself in the process of finding out what he thinks. Bacon writes for those who want to move the world; Montaigne writes for those who want to remain unmoved. Bacon describes what he has learned of things, but he keeps himself out of the picture; Montaigne describes things as they are concentrated within himself, and he always remains his own principal subject. Montaigne is more to the twentieth-century taste, for he has created the taste by which he is appreciated. He wins us over by the disarming naturalness with which he announces that he cannot make love standing up, that he hates getting his hair cut after dinner, that he cannot abide the touch of his own sweat, or that he is overly fastidious at stool. To mention things like that would never have occurred to Bacon, and one suspects that he must have thought of the unbuttoned Montaigne as a man of little dignity, even a boor or a clown.

Machiavelli was more Bacon's type. Bacon refers to Machiavelli numerous times, almost always approvingly. One can think of the *Essays* as a kind of self-help book in the Machiavellian style: Here, help yourself—to wealth, power, honors, as much as you can manage to pick up and carry home. One essay considers the fundamental Machiavellian precept that it can be bad to be too good:

> Errors indeed in this virtue of goodness or charity may be committed. The Italians have an ungracious proverb, *Tanto buon che val niente: So good, that he is good for nothing*. And one of the doctors of Italy, Nicholas Machiavel, had the confidence to put in writing, almost in plain terms, *That the Christian faith had given up good men in prey to those that are tyrannical and unjust*. Which he spake, because there was never law or sect or opinion did so much magnify goodness as the Christian religion doth.

But Bacon wasn't Machiavellian through and through. "It is true that a little philosophy inclineth man's mind to atheism, but depth in philosophy bringeth men's minds about to religion," he writes in "Of Atheism." Reverence for justice and love of beauty lead to God. In "Of Judicature," Bacon asserts that judges "should imitate God, in whose seat they sit." "Of Gardens" begins, "God Almighty first planted a Garden. And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures." It is such a pleasure

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that he devotes an entire page to a catalogue of trees, fruits, and flowers, as though he enjoyed the edenic pleasure of naming the things God had made.

Yet Bacon's is a complicated, even a compromised, faith. In *The Advancement of Learning*, Bacon insists that the end of knowledge is not mental comfort or intellectual amusement or pride or profit, but "the glory of the Creator and the relief of man's estate." The contemplative life Aristotle esteemed as the highest good no longer seems good enough. Contemplation and action are to be "more nearly and straightly conjoined and united than they have been." "Knowledge is power," as Bacon's best-known aphorism goes; expanded in Bacon's most ambitious work, *The New Organon*, the thought runs, "Human knowledge and human power meet in one; for where the cause is not known the effect cannot be produced. Nature to be commanded must be obeyed; and that which in contemplation is as the cause is in operation as the rule."

Bacon's scientific project claims to begin in Christian belief. In *The Great Instauration*, the introductory section of *The New Organon*, the philosopher does what one so rarely sees philosophers doing: He prays, asking that God "vouchsafe through my hands to endow the human family with new mercies." The intellectual and spiritual virtues, Bacon's prayer continues, are meant to be joined, and adhering to them devotedly will ensure that "we may not be wise above measure and sobriety, but cultivate truth in charity." This seems orthodox. But before Bacon is through, the principal Christian virtues that attend charity—that is, faith and hope—will undergo a notable transformation, so that it seems he is laying the foundation for a new religion altogether.

In *The New Organon*, the word *hope* is reiterated endlessly. "I am now therefore to speak touching hope, especially as I am not a dealer in promises, and wish neither to force nor to ensnare men's judgments, but to lead them by the hand with their good will." The chief reason so little progress has been made in the sciences is that men despair of knowing what they must in order to improve

UPI / Corbis-Bettmann

Bacon represented, in his famous hat, as the philosophical author.

their lot. Hope is the necessary antidote to this inertia, and Bacon sees cause for hope everywhere. Men have made numerous discoveries by accident, so imagine what they will discover "when they apply themselves to seek and make this their business." The new scientific method of induction will make possible advances that no one has dared dream: "There is no hope except in a new birth of science; that is, in raising it regularly up from experience and building it afresh, which no one (I think) will say has yet been done or thought of." Hope is indispensable to the propagation of Bacon's new faith, which impetuous and cautious men alike will eagerly embrace: "There is hope enough and to spare, not only to make a bold man try, but also to make a sober-minded and wise man believe." The new faith is in scientific advance without limit, and the hope is in the future that man will make for himself.

Much of what Bacon hoped for is now the stuff of ordinary life. Yet the more we triumph over nature, the more distant appears the religious premise of his undertaking. The Fall, he writes, cost man "his innocency and . . . his dominion over nature," but both losses "can even in this life be in some part repaired; the former by religion and faith, the latter by arts and sciences." Indeed science, Bacon predicts, ensures the triumph of religion: "Only let the human race recover that right over nature which belongs to it by divine bequest, and let power be given it; the exercise thereof will be governed by sound reason and true religion."

Of course, the ascendancy of human power that Bacon trumpeted has come—in our own time—to look less like the golden age he promised. It looks, in fact, not very different from the original Fall as Bacon describes it: "It was the ambitious and proud desire of moral knowledge to judge of good and evil, to the end that man may revolt from God and give laws to himself, which was the form and manner of the temptation." Abortion, euthanasia, genetic engineering: Power over life and death belongs to us more and more, and we act as though we know what to do with it. The temptation to seize mastery of one's own fate is a potent one, and it trumps Bacon's Christianity. In *The Advancement of Learning*, he frankly

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advocates euthanasia, as though it were the most natural thing in the world.

In the *New Atlantis*, Bacon pictures a Spanish ship's lighting upon the imaginary island of Bensalem, "a land of angels," whose inhabitants are remarkable for their Christian piety, free of any chauvinism or contentiousness, and far more technologically advanced than their European visitors. The "Father" of Salomon's House, the scientific foundation that is Bensalem's principal enterprise, tells the bedazzled Spaniards, "The End of our Foundation is the knowledge of Causes and secret motions of things, and the enlarging of the bounds of Human Empire, to the effecting of all things possible." The Father pointedly does not say "all good things possible"; anything men can do, they will do. Neither are the causes of which he speaks the Aristotelian first causes, the natural ends for which each thing is made; men get to decide the uses to which things shall be put.

This is perilous ground. The Bensalemites are such godly souls, their ever-growing powers present no danger. The same cannot be said of the rest of us. We have inherited Bacon's faults along with his "new mercies." Bacon was not altogether blind to the spiritual dangers with which science would confront us, but he pressed onward nevertheless with abandon. And so do we.

The religious basis of Bacon's blessed science crumbled, because it was flawed to begin with. In Bacon's Christian worldliness, there was always more worldliness than Christianity. Laboring for the relief of man's estate, the scientists and physicians who are Bacon's descendants perform miracles like those Christ performed, curing the apparently incurable, even bringing the dead back to life. Bacon imagined that religion belonged merely at the beginning and the end of this project—that if we started with a pious prayer and maintained the pious hope that every increase of mastery over nature would somehow eventually redound to the greater glory of God, then we needn't concern ourselves with the soul along the way. Time hasn't proved him right. ♦

Rise and Fall

The meteoric career of Preston Sturges

BY BRIAN MURRAY

Preston Sturges's career stands as one of the most successful—and curious—in the history of Hollywood. From 1940 to 1944, Sturges was among Hollywood's highest paid directors, producing a remarkable run of hits, including *The Great McGinty*, *The Lady Eve*, and *Sullivan's Travels*, winning an Academy Award and two more nominations along the way. By the late 1940s, however, he was seen by many in the film industry as too unpredictable and demanding—and too sophisticated for popular taste. In 1948 Sturges completed the fine *Unfaithfully Yours*. But it failed at the box-office, and in the same year he also wrote and directed *The Beautiful Blonde from Bashful Bend*, a lumbering comic western that did even worse. Less than a decade after his debut, Sturges was professionally finished. He died suddenly, at sixty, in 1959.

Simon & Schuster

In some ways Sturges was simply ahead of his time: an ingenious if uneven filmmaker who felt stifled by the industry's studio system. To be sure, he had a firm grip on the principles of popular comedy; for sheer, shameless frivolity he remains hard to beat. But Sturges's characters, like his plots, are complicated. His comic sense was often tinged with darkness, and his expressions of tenderness offset by a sharp satirical edge. Sturges's favorite author was H.L. Mencken—and it shows, for Sturges descends in some ways from the journalistic and literary debunkers who gained fame in the 1920s and 1930s: Mencken, Sinclair Lewis, and Ring Lardner. Sturges took similarly skeptical views of human nature, finding a marked proclivity for credulity, chicanery, and greed. He routinely satirized not only business and politics, but that most bankable of commodities, romance.

But unlike Mencken, Sturges kept his cynicism in check. In the end, his art owes more to Charles Dickens. Like Dickens, Sturges was particularly fond of characters made vulnerable by naiveté or eccentricity. Moreover, his movies—like Dickens's novels—commemorate acts of kindness and generosity, however oddly displayed. Sturges "could allow that the world runs on greed, delusion, and injustice," wrote one admiring critic, "while he reveled in the crazy exceptions that prove the rule."

Born in Chicago in 1898, Sturges had a childhood that was itself a little crazy. His roving mother, Mary Dempsey, spent years as a kind of aide-de-camp to the dancer Isadora Duncan, one of the era's most flamboyant figures. As a result, Sturges spent much of his youth in Europe, shifting from school to school. But he wasn't poor, for his mother, married five times, wisely chose for her second husband a wealthy

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stockbroker, Solomon Sturges. Amiable and generous, Sturges remained close to his stepson, which may be one reason for the staunch father figures who appear frequently in Sturges's films.

After serving in the First World War, Sturges worked briefly for his mother's poorly run cosmetics company, Maison Desti. An inveterate inventor, Sturges added his own "kissproof lipstick" to the firm's faltering product line. Before he turned to writing plays in 1927, Sturges also patented an air-cooled mini-car, a vertical takeoff plane, and "an intaglio photo-etching process that I thought was going to make me rich."

It didn't. But writing did, at least for a time. Sturges was a chronic spendthrift who spent much of his working life digging out from debt. In 1929 he scored a Broadway success with *Strictly Dishonorable*, his second play. Moving to Hollywood, he began to write film scripts, including *The Power and the Glory*, released in 1933. Starring Spencer Tracy as a railroad tycoon, *The Power and the Glory*'s novel use of flashback and voice-over narration—as well as its focus on a prominent man's puzzling personality—almost certainly influenced the era's most acclaimed film, *Citizen Kane* (1941).

Many of Sturges's scripts were never produced or were heavily revised. He did succeed, however, with *Diamond Jim* (1935) and *Easy Living* (1937), and in the process refined his style and themes. *Diamond Jim* tracks the career of a compulsive tycoon whose ascent to the top ends in gluttony and gloom. *Easy Living*, directed by Mitchell Leisen, follows a fetching working girl who, thanks to a few foul-ups and a lot of good luck, moves from rags to riches overnight. *Easy Living* is passably directed, but the writing is pure Sturges—a deft blend of smart dialogue and physical humor of the broadest kind. Sturges's style is simultaneously lowbrow and highbrow: slapstick and sophistication combined. It's what you'd get if the Three Stooges teamed up with S.J. Perleman. Its tone is also mixed. *Easy Living* unfolds like a fairy tale, with social commentary and romantic comedy swirled in along the way.

From the start Sturges wanted to direct his own scripts, and in 1940, with *The Great McGinty*, Paramount finally gave him the chance. The film's main character is a hulking street tough who collects payoffs for the crooks who run city hall. McGinty, played by Brian Dunlevy, proves so skilled at his thuggish trade that his political bosses offer him promotion—to mayor. McGinty smartens up for the part, sporting top hats and swanky suits. And for the sake of appearances he marries his level-headed secretary, the divorced mother of two small children. "Women got the vote," notes one of his handlers, "and they don't like bachelors."

To his surprise, McGinty finds delight in the soothing routines of domestic life. As mayor, however, he remains a model of cronyism and graft, funneling funds straight into the pockets of his shifty pals. Mencken once described the typical politician as a "professional sharper and sneak thief," and *The Great McGinty* offered an uncomfortable civics lesson at a time when the names of Boston's James Michael Curley and Chicago's Big Bill Thompson were fresh in the American mind. After winning the governorship, however, McGinty starts to reform. Inspired by his wife, McGinty stops mixing with bagmen, vowing to put the public's good before private gain. But Sturges denies him a predictably happy Hollywood ending. Exposed by his accomplices, McGinty flees the country to avoid jail. He finds himself back at the bottom, tending bar in some unnamed banana republic. McGinty begins the film as a comic heavy, but ends up as a figure of pathos—wrecked less by the ironies of fate than his own character and wasted past.

Sturges's next film, *Christmas in July* (1940), deals more lightly with similar themes of wealth and success. Jimmy MacDonald, its central character, lives in a poor neighborhood in New York's lower East Side. Effectively played by Dick Powell, Jimmy is diligent but ingenuous, a lowly clerk at the big Baxter Coffee Company. His dreams soar, however, when—along with two million other hopefuls—he enters a slogan-writing contest sponsored by a competing coffee brand. Jimmy's entry seems sure to lose, for it's based on the preposterous proposition that coffee doesn't

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Jean Arthur flirts with Edward Arnold in Easy Living.

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Brian Dunlevy and Akim Tamiroff square off in The Great McGinty.

really stop sleep. But some cruel coworkers trick Jimmy into believing that he has, in fact, won the contest, and—following a chain of comical improbabilities—he presents himself at the company's headquarters and duly collects a $25,000 check.

Radiantly happy, Jimmy and his attractive fiancée proceed to splurge. First, however, they head straight for Schindel's spiffy department store to buy gifts for all their relatives and friends, determined "not to forget anybody." When Jimmy returns triumphantly home with hundreds of presents—toys, clothes, furniture—his neighborhood is transformed into an unlikely setting for merriment and good cheer. It's Christmas in July.

Unlike *The Great McGinty*, *Christmas in July* ends brightly for Jimmy and his fiancée—as well as for the Baxter Coffee Company and its obtuse and blustering boss. Much of the film's humor is gentle, even sentimental; indeed, in the main, it offers a Frank Capra-like tribute to the persistence and decency of the common man. But Sturges, as usual, can't resist shifting gears, and there are moments when *Christmas in July*—like Capra's own *Meet John Doe* (1941)—darkens considerably. Thus Jimmy's festive neighborhood party gets messy when men from Schindel's turn up, hopping mad, insisting that Jimmy played Santa Clause with a rubber check. The apoplectic owner of the rival coffee company also arrives, charging Jimmy with fraud and demanding his arrest. Now the crowd grows angry and menacing. Words heat up; threats are exchanged; children turn sinister; objects are thrown. A thin line, the merry movie reminds us, divides a happy crowd of neighbors from a murderous mob of strangers.

Sturges finished *The Lady Eve* only three months after the premier of *Christmas in July*—proof of his remarkable productivity and popularity. A critical success, *The Lady Eve* remains one of Sturges's most widely admired works. Its title character is Jean Harrington, played by Barbara Stanwyck, an alluring temptress and con artist who makes her lucrative living by cheating at cards. In search of suitable dupes, Jean and her amiable but crooked father board a cruise ship, where they soon spot Henry Fonda's character, Charles Pike.

Pike is handsome and rich, the heir to a beer fortune, and Jean's father calls him "as fine a specimen of the sucker species as I've ever seen." But Jean finds him a fine specimen—period. She doesn't want to fleece him; she wants to marry him. Like any good Sturges script, *The Lady Eve* takes serpentine turns. But Jean, a self-described adventuress, is utterly determined to catch Pike, who is passive and aloof, a toter of books. She proves effective. Aboard ship, Pike, an amateur herpetologist, shuns the flirtations of an array of women, preferring to sit alone reading about snakes. But in no time Jean has Pike literally kneeling at her feet—a hooked male drunk on perfume.

Sturges, married four times, was considered good copy by the gossip columnists. In fact, given his turbulent romantic history, it's tempting to see in Sturges's depiction of Jean Harrington an echoing of Mencken's notorious claim that women are crafty, manipulative, and too readily romanticized by gullible men. But further familiarity with Sturges's work suggests otherwise. Sturges is clearly intrigued by women who, like "the Lady Eve," blend sophistication with a generous spirit and feminine charm. In the end, Jean Harrington acts nobly, putting love above lucre, and Stanwyck simply glows in Sturges's light. She never looked sexier.

The lead character in *Sullivan's Travels* (1942), Sturges's next film, is a rich Hollywood director who has previously turned out such cinematic froth as *Hey, Hey in the Hayloft* and *Ants in Your Pants of 1939*. But now he wants to explore "the potentialities of film as the sociological and artistic medium that it is." He aims to direct a work of "stark realism," a "true canvas of suffering

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humanity" entitled *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* Thus Sullivan disguises himself as a hobo and, with nothing but a dime in his pocket, sets out to discover "what it's like to be poor" by hitching rides and hopping freights.

Much to his irritation, however, Sullivan isn't alone. He's followed by a public-relations crew sent by his studio: a busload of colorful eccentrics, two of them played by William Demarest and Frank Moran, gifted character actors who show up regularly in Sturges's films. Eventually, Sullivan ditches his zany colleagues and meets a wise-cracking, disenchanted young actress memorably played by Veronica Lake. In fact "The Girl," as Sturges's script calls her, steals the show in *Sullivan's Travels*: She's a saucy mix of innocence and worldliness, part angel, part scamp. But then, as Jean Harrington informed Pike in *The Lady Eve*, the best girls "aren't as good as you think they are, and the bad ones aren't nearly so bad."

Sullivan and the Girl stand in soup lines, sleep in box cars, and collect tales of woe. Predictably, they fall in love before returning to the luxuries of Hollywood and the comforts of home. Still, Sullivan's generous impulses remain strong. Once again, dressed as a tramp, the director hits the streets of Los Angeles, passing out five-dollar bills to beleaguered souls. Sullivan's good deed backfires, however, when he's cornered by a vicious wretch who beats him unconscious and bolts with his cash.

What follows, as one critic notes, abruptly transforms *Sullivan's Travels* into a cross between *It Happened One Night* and *I Am a Fugitive from a Chain Gang*. Sullivan, dazed for weeks from his beating, finds himself charged with assault and sentenced to a grim prison complete with sweat boxes and savage guards. But it's here that Sullivan gains fresh insight into art when, as a rare treat, he and his fellow inmates watch a rollicking cartoon. Sullivan notices that, as the prisoners laugh, their troubles vanish. Like Sturges himself—whose earliest comedies appeared in the midst of the Depression—Sullivan concludes upon his release that "meaningful" art doesn't demand preachy realism and that humor too is a valuable gift, an essential balm in a troubled world. Sturges dedicates *Sullivan's Travels* "to the memory of those who made us laugh: the motley mountebanks, the clowns, the buffoons, in all times and in all nations, whose efforts have lightened our burden a little."

Sturges continued his roll through the early 1940s. His next film, *The Palm Beach Story*—completed less than a year after *Sullivan's Travels*—proceeds with confidence and verve. Its central character, Gerry Jeffers, is a spirited young woman (Claudette Colbert) who decides reluctantly to divorce her husband, an insolvent inventor (Joel McCrea). Gerry and Tom live over their heads in glamorous Manhattan, and she hates counting pennies amidst so many diamonds and furs. So she travels to Florida, where she meets a mild-mannered millionaire named Hackensacker, played perfectly by another Sturges regular, Rudy Vallee.

Not the director in Sullivan's Travels *but the conductor in* Unfaithfully Yours *best represents Sturges: his sophistication, sentimentality, success, and failure.*

Like several of Sturges's more likable characters, Hackensacker finds great pleasure in giving his money away. He showers Gerry with gifts and nearly wins her hand. And like Sturges's other comedies, *The Palm Beach Story* ends up endorsing traditional values in its own madcap way. Gerry returns happily to her husband, and Hackensacker finds his own suitable mate. Indeed, like many traditional comedies, *The Palm Beach Story* concludes with a grand wedding scene, and implies that all's well that ends well—or at least as well as can be expected in a world that Sturges, in *Sullivan's Travels*, likened to a "cock-eyed carnival."

Sturges showed a similarly sure hand in *The Miracle of Morgan's Creek*. Its main character, Trudy Kockenlocker (Betty Hutton) discovers that she's become pregnant after a long night of revelry with her friends and lonely soldiers stationed at a nearby base. Dimly, Trudy recalls getting sloshed that night and impulsively marrying a war-bound soldier whose name she can't quite recall: Razkiwatski, perhaps. Trudy does, finally, find herself a husband, and—amid much comic hoopla—delivers sextuplets to boot. The film's rather risqué premise made *Miracle of Morgan's Creek* one of Sturges's most controversial and profitable films.

At the height of his success, Sturges was one of the richest, most sociable, and most ambitious men in show business. But he spent wildly, invested poorly, and turned increasingly to drink. He opened a restaurant, The Players, on Hollywood's Sunset Strip. Initially, The Players was a great success, attracting celebrities and tourists alike. But Sturges badly managed the restaurant, which he sold, desperate for money, in 1953. For Sturges, who spent much of his free time schmoozing with guests, it proved a particularly disappointing flop. California Pictures—Sturges's most ambitious business venture, begun in collaboration with the unstable Howard Hughes—also sputtered, stalled, and, perhaps inevitably, dissolved. In 1946 the studio released *The Sin of Harold Diddlebock*, which Sturges wrote and directed as a comeback vehicle for Harold Lloyd, one of the great comic stars of the early days of film. But from the start *Diddlebock* was burdened with difficulties, including an oddly leaden script and Lloyd's constant meddling with Sturges's directorial decisions. The result was a mess of clunky scenes and tired gags that did nothing to further Sturges's career, or Lloyd's. Lloyd even sued Sturges, claiming that *Diddlebock* seriously damaged his reputation.

In fact, the final decade of Sturges's life resembles one long pratfall: a fairly

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steady slide into alcohol and unexpected anonymity. Sturges did find a measure of happiness in his fourth and final marriage. He continued to work sporadically as a screenwriter, director, and actor. He investigated several intriguing collaborative proposals involving, among others, Michael Wilding, Carlo Ponti, and Howard Hawks. But his later success was severely limited, his grand plans came to nothing, and his bills continued to mount. "The Nietzschean theory of living dangerously is splendid," he observed near the end of his life, "but should be modified to live dangerously with a small income."

Trouble certainly surrounded the 1948 *Unfaithfully Yours*, widely considered Sturges's last important film. The studio head, Darryl Zanuck, was wary of Sturges's improvisational methods and not only hovered over the film's production but—to Sturges's immense irritation—closely supervised its final cut. Worse, Rex Harrison, the star of *Unfaithfully Yours*, found himself at the center of a national scandal when his lover, the actress Carole Landis, committed suicide only weeks before the film's release. At the time, Harrison was still married to another, more prominent actress, Lilli Palmer. The press pounced on the story, and *Unfaithfully Yours* was buried by bad publicity.

Harrison's character in *Unfaithfully Yours* is Sir Alfred de Carter, a famous orchestra conductor who has come to suspect that his beautiful young wife has been unfaithful. As his suspicions mount, Sir Alfred grows increasingly obsessed with the notion that a man who can so deftly lead a large orchestra has so little control over his own life. Sturges's inventive spirit was often evident in his art: He loved to experiment with a variety of techniques—including flashbacks, zoom shots, freeze frames—that only much later became commonplace in American films. *Unfaithfully Yours* includes a much-celebrated sequence in which Sturges zooms into Sir Alfred's anguished mind as he stands at his podium, before a packed house, conducting skilled versions of three famous classical works. As he performs, Sir Alfred lets his imagination hunt for the most fitting response to his wife's alleged infidelity.

Conducting Rossini's Overture to *Semiramide*, Sir Alfred concocts an elaborately foolproof scene in which he murders Daphne in a rage of bloody revenge. During a subsequent piece—Tchaikovsky's *Francesca da Rimini*—he suavely challenges Tony to a lethal game of Russian roulette. But during Wagner's reconciliation theme from *Tannhäuser*, Sir Alfred permits his better side to rise. With graciousness and tact,

Sturges in the mid-1940s

Univ. of California Press

he sends Daphne off with his blessing and a magnanimous check.

Much of the comedy in *Unfaithfully Yours* comes from Sturges's deflating of Sir Alfred, whose smooth and pompous façade slowly cracks. After the concert, Sir Alfred, still seething, decides to pursue his murderous scenario, which proves far more difficult in practice than within the chamber of his own imagination. Before Sturges is finished with him, the suave conductor is turned into a stumbling, fumbling clown who also realizes, not surprisingly, that he's wholly incapable of killing his wife. So Sir Alfred opts for the high road. He forgives Daphne and prepares to bid her adieu—a gesture that proves unnecessary when, in the end, she convincingly professes her loyalty and love.

Sturges probably intended the modest and unflappable movie director in *Sullivan's Travels* to be the idealized picture of himself. But it is Sir Alfred in *Unfaithfully Yours* who actually represents more of Sturges: his vanity, his impetuousness, and his volatility—together with his talent, his sophistication, his sentimentality, his success, and his failure. Sturges's rise was meteoric, and so was his fall. The last years of his life, from the failures of *Unfaithfully Yours* and *The Beautiful Blonde from Bashful Bend* in 1948 to his death in 1959, saw some domestic contentment, with his new wife and children. His career, however, was in tatters—as perhaps it had always been doomed to be.

Certainly the booze hadn't helped; the 1940s were hard days for men who couldn't hold their liquor, with the temptations and pressures to drink everywhere, particularly for a man who wanted to be an openhanded and popular restaurateur. But even without his drinking, Sturges contained parts that didn't seem to belong together. He had H.L. Mencken's sneer at the American "booboisie"—and he had a profound admiration for the American common man. He had the sophistication of a worldly figure whose wealthy boyhood was spent in the great capitals of Europe in the ambit of Isadora Duncan—and he had a deep sentimentality about small-town American life. He had a vision of human beings as corrupt, foolish, and hard of heart—and he spent his best years making frenetic comedies that usually ended with the triumph of common sense and human generosity.

The astonishing thing is that he put it all together even for the short period he managed. Bosley Crowther, reviewing the film in 1948, hailed *Unfaithfully Yours* as the work of "an agile, adult mind." And indeed, *Unfaithfully Yours*, at once silly and elegant, superbly illustrates Sturges's mature understanding that all men have their flaws; that generosity, however, always becomes us; and that forgiveness, often difficult, is the most generous gift of all. ♦

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Not a Parody

Republican presidential candidate Alan Keyes jumps into a mosh pit at the urging of his daughter after attending a Renewing America rally Sunday, January 23, 2000, in Des Moines, Iowa. Political satirist Michael Moore promised the endorsement of his political cable program to the first candidate who would jump into the pit.

—AP Photo/M. Spencer Green

the weekly Standard
February 7, 2000

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The Case for Sweatshops

David R. Henderson is a research fellow at the Hoover Institution and an economics professor at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Candida Rosa Lopez, an employee in a Nicaraguan garment factory, works long hours over a sewing machine at less than a dollar an hour. Interviewed recently by a *Miami Herald* reporter, Ms. Lopez has a message for people in the United States and other wealthy countries who are nervous about buying goods from "sweatshops": "I wish more people would buy the clothes we make."

Contrary to what you have heard, sweatshops in third-world countries are a good deal for the people who work in them. Why? Because work, other than slave labor, is an exchange. A worker chooses a particular job because she thinks herself better off in that job than at her next-best alternative. Most of us would regard a low-paying job in Nicaragua or Honduras as a lousy job. But we're not being asked to take those jobs. Those jobs are the best options those workers have, or else they would quit and work elsewhere. You don't make someone better off by taking away the best of a bunch of bad choices.

Many workers in third-world sweatshops have left even harder, lower-paying jobs in agriculture to move to garment factories. Moreover, sweatshops are a normal step in economic development. Singapore, Malaysia, South Korea, and Hong Kong all had sweatshop jobs thirty years ago. They don't now because workers in those countries have acquired skills and employers have accumulated capital. That's what will happen in Honduras, Nicaragua, and other poor countries—if we only let it.

What happens when people persuade companies not to hire children to work long hours? Oxfam, the British charity, reported that when factory owners in Bangladesh were pressured to fire child laborers, thousands of the children became prostitutes or starved.

Yet the National Labor Committee's executive director, Charles Kernaghan, goes around the country attacking sweatshops and trying to put legal barriers in the way of people buying from sweatshops. Robert Reich, former U.S. labor secretary under President Clinton, pressured Reebok International and Sears Roebuck to get ShinWon, their South Korean subcontractor in Honduras, to lay off fifty teenage girls. He apparently did not ask, or care, what happened to them after they lost their jobs. Why are Kernaghan and Reich hurting the people they claim to care about? Simple. The people they really care about are unionized garment workers in the United States; the NLC is funded by U.S. unions. The garment workers lost on NAFTA and lost on GATT. This is their last-ditch effort to prevent foreign competition.

The next time *you* feel guilty for buying clothes made in a third-world sweatshop, remember this: you're helping the workers who made that clothing. The people who *should* feel guilty are those who argue against, or use legislation to prevent us, giving a boost up the economic ladder to members of the human race unlucky enough to have been born in a poor country. Someone who intentionally gets you fired is not your friend.

— David R. Henderson

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